

HOW HARRY FELL IN LOVE.

BY JAMES H. DANA.

ALL the girls in Flowervale were in love with Harry Vernon. That is to say, they admired him excessively, and were ready to fall in love, if he should lead the way. Fanny Somers, the little witch, was the only exception. Merry, dancing and pretty as a fairy, it was a question whether she had ever yet thought of love: if she had, she never talked of it.

Harry's father was a Senator in Congress, and he himself was a young lawyer of brilliant talents, finished education and handsome fortune. It was known that his father wished him to marry, and did not, as is often the case, insist on his selecting an heiress. The now grey-haired statesman had made a love-match in his youth, and still worshipped the memory of the wife he had too early lost. "Let your heart choose, my son," he said. "Marriage, without true affection, holds out but a poor show for happiness."

Most of those, not directly interested in the event, thought that Isabel Fortescue would carry off the prize. She was decidedly the belle of the village. Having received her education at a fashionable seminary, there was scarcely an accomplishment of which she could not boast. Besides, the families of Vernon and Fortescue had been the leading ones in the county for two generations; and gossips said that the union of the two fortunes, and of the united influence, would give Harry a position almost unrivalled.

Certain it is that Harry visited Isabel very often. Those who envied her accused her of manoeuvring to win him. "Throws herself in his way continually," said one. "Did ever any body," cried another, "see a girl make love so bare-facedly?" "She ought to get him, I'm sure," sneered another, "for she has tried hard enough." Nevertheless, as honest chroniclers, we must record the fact, that some of these very young ladies, such is the infirmity of human nature, did their very prettiest to

out-manceuvre Isabel and get Harry for themselves.

Harry had not seen Fanny since she was a child. It was only a month since she had left school, and returned home again; and the first time she joined in the village social circle was at a pic-nic. Here her blooming complexion, graceful figure and ringing laugh had been the theme of admiration by the beaux, the envy of the belles. Harry had been her partner in a dance or two, and, in common with others, felt it would be only civil to call upon her. So the morning after the party he sallied forth to make the round of the village girls.

He first visited Isabel. She was reclining in a fauteuil, charmingly dressed, and reading a novel. All she could talk about was her fatigue. Yet she looked bewitchingly, it was incontestable, in the subdued light of that sumptuous parlor, with elegant pictures on the walls, bouquets of flowers all about, and an atmosphere of exquisite refinement around. Never had Harry felt so much tempted to be in love. He staid nearly an hour, when he had intended to stop for only a few minutes; and would not, perhaps, have gone then, if other gentlemen had not dropt in.

From Isabel's he went to several other houses. Everywhere he found the young ladies dressed to receive company. Some were reading novels; some had a book of poetry open before them; and one, who had a pretty hand, was coquettishly knitting a purse. Not one of them appeared to have anything serious to do. Most of them affected, like Isabel, to be quite languid, and talked as if the fatigue of the day before had nearly killed them.

When Harry reached the pretty, but unpretending cottage, where Fanny resided with her widowed mother, he found the hall door opened to admit the breeze, and so, just tapping at the parlor entrance, he entered bowing. In the

shaded light of the cool, fragrant room, he could not, for a moment, see; but he noticed immediately that no one answered his salutation; and, directly, he beheld that the apartment was empty. Just then, however, a fresh, liquid voice, as merry as a bird's in June, was heard warbling in an inner apartment. Harry listened awhile charmed, but finding that his knocking was not heard, and recognizing, as he thought, Fanny's voice, finally made bold to go in search of the singer. Passing down the hall, and through another open door, he suddenly found himself in the kitchen, a large, airy apartment, scrupulously clean, with Fanny, at the end opposite to him, standing before a dough-trough, kneading flour and carolling like a lark.

It was a picture an artist would have loved to paint. Fanny's face was seen partly in profile, showing to perfection her long lashes, and bringing out in relief the pouting lips and round chin. The breeze blew her brown curls playfully about, and occasionally quite over her face, at which times she would throw them back with a pretty toss of her head. Her arms were bare; and rounded, white, or more taper arms never were: they fairly put to shame, with their rosy pearliness, the snowy flour powdered over them. As she moved, with quick steps, at her task, her trim figure showed all its grace; and her neat ankle and delicate foot twinkled in and out. For awhile she did not observe Harry. It was not till she turned to put down the dredging-box, that she beheld him.

Most of our fair readers, we suppose, would have screamed, and perhaps have run out of the opposite door. Fanny did no such thing. She blushed a little, as was natural, but, having no false shame, she saw no reason to be frightened merely because a handsome young gentleman had caught her at work. So she curtsied prettily, laughed one of her gayest laughs, and said, holding up her hands,

"I can't shake hands with you, Mr. Vernon, you see. Mamma was kind enough to let me go to the pic-nic, yesterday, and put off some of my work; and so I'm doing double to-day, to make up for it. If you'll be kind enough to wait a minute, I'll call mamma."

"No, no," said Harry, charmed by this frank innocence, and unceremoniously taking a well-scrubbed chair, "I've only a few minutes to stay. My call is on you, I came to see how you bore the fatigues of yesterday."

Fanny laughed till her teeth, so white and so little, looked, behind the rosy lips, like pearls set in the richest ruby enamel. "Fatigued! Why, we had such a charming time yesterday,

that one couldn't get tired, even if one had been a hundred years old."

"You'll never grow old," said Harry, surprised into what would have been flattery, if he had not sincerely thought it; and his countenance showed his admiration for the bright, happy creature before him.

Fanny blushed, but rallied, and answered, laughingly, "Never grow old? Oh! soon enough. What a funny sight I'll be, to be sure, bent almost double, and a cap on my head like granny Horn's."

Harry laughed too, so ludicrous was the image; and thus he and Fanny were as much at home with each other, at once, as if they had been acquainted for years.

The intended five minutes imperceptibly grew into ten, and the ten into half an hour. Fanny continued at her household work, pleasantly chatting the while, both she and Harry mutually so interested as to forget time and place alike. At last the entrance of Mrs. Somers interrupted the *tele-a-tele*. Fanny was a little embarrassed, when she found how long she and Harry had been alone; but the easy, matter-of-course manner of Harry, as he shook hands with her mother, restored her to herself.

If the elegant refinement about Isabel had tempted Harry to fall in love, the household charm which surrounded Fanny forced him to do so, whether or no. He went away, thinking to himself what a charming wife Fanny would make, and how sweetly she would look, in her neat, home dress, engaged in her domestic duties. Nor is Harry the only young bachelor, who remembers that a wife cannot always be in full dress, and who naturally wishes to know how she will look in the kitchen. "A wife ought as much to know how to manage her house," he said to himself, "as a man to understand business. I don't wish a wife of mine, indeed, to be maid of all work; but I should like to have her capable of overseeing her servants; and domestics discover very soon whether their mistress is competent, and obey, or disregard her accordingly. Besides Fanny looked bewitching, this morning. Ah! if I had such a dear, little wife, how I'd coax her to go into the kitchen occasionally, that I might see her at work."

It soon became apparent that it would be no fault of Harry, if he did not have Fanny for a wife. Never was a man deeper in love, nor did he make any effort to conceal it. Had Fanny been a foolish flirt, she would have played with his feelings, as vain girls will when secure of a lover. But she was too frank and good for this, and only hesitated long enough to be certain of

the state of her own heart, when she made Harry happy by accepting him.

Two persons more fitted for each other, in fact, could not be. Though always merry, because always happy, Fanny was amiable, intelligent, and full of sound sense. She had read and thought a great deal, especially for one so young. Her heart ran over with "unwritten poetry." Had Harry sought, for a life-time, he could not have found a wife so companionable, and so suited in every way to him.

What a talk the engagement made when it came out! The haughty Isabel, who, without being half as capable of sincere love as Fanny, had made up her mind to have Harry, and whose vanity therefore was piqued, even degraded herself so much as to call the bride-elect "an artful and intriguing puss." Other disappointed beauties had other hard names for Fanny. But though, when our heroine first heard of these slanders, she shed a few tears, she soon dried her eyes, for, with Harry's love, nothing could make her long unhappy.

It was not till the young couple had set off on their wedding tour, that Harry told his wife what had first made him fall in love with her.

"Every other girl, I visited that morning," he said, "was playing the fine lady; and that, while, as I well know, their mothers were often slaving in the kitchen. I reasoned that the daughter, who would neglect her duty to a parent, could scarcely be expected to be less selfish toward a husband. Besides, it is a common error with your sex, now-a-days, to suppose that it is debasing to engage in domestic duties. To a man of sense, dearest, a woman never looks more attractive than at such a time. As Wordsworth writes

'Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty.
A countenance in which there meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright nor good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.'

As he recited these lines, with exquisite sensibility, he put his arm around Fanny's waist, and drew her toward him: and the young wife, looking up into his face, with devoted affection, rested her head on his bosom, and shed happy tears.

And so we leave them.

THE BETRAYED; OR, EXTRACTS FROM AN OLD JOURNAL.

BY E. W. DEWEES.

Rockland, Hudson River, May 1st, 1802.

My eighteenth birthday—and this beautiful, bright morning is not more radiant than my sunny hopes. What joy passes that of loving, and being loved? I know not how I could have lived before I knew Edward. I date my existence but one happy year—the previous period seems but a dull, blank monotony, which I can scarcely remember.

How fresh and green the foliage and verdure are this morning, after yesterday's shower. Sunshine within and about me. Ah, I am too happy!

May 4th, 1802.

I have heard love described as a restless, turbulent passion, full of torturing doubts and fears, wild joys and causeless agitations. Not such has been my experience. When I am with Edward a deep peace falls on my soul. A happiness too profound for expression settles on my heart. It seems as though no sorrow could touch me in that presence—"no wave of trouble roll across my peaceful heart."

It matters not to either of us, that no articulate words of love have ever yet been exchanged between us. There is a language more delicate, and subtle, than speech, and Edward's eyes—his voice—his every look, tone, and gesture, have long since spoken to me in love's own language. The very flowers, with which he daily surrounds me, breathe his love in fragrant sighs.

I expect my old schoolmate, Julia Gray, here to-morrow, to spend a week with me. Edward whispered me to-night that he was vexed at her coming, and in truth the anticipation of her visit does not give me the pleasure it did when the invitation was given, a year ago. I fear Edward guessed as much from my tell-tale face, which he knows so well how to read.

May 5th, 1802.

How shall my happiness find words? Edward has told me—no, not quite, but almost told me of his love. It is sweet to find assurance doubly sure.

We were walking in the maple avenue, and were so happy, when he turned toward me with a look which made my cheeks flush, and my heart

beat, from a consciousness of the import of the words he was about to utter. I turned from his gaze in some confusion. He took my hand in both his, and said earnestly,

"Fanny, there is something I have long wished to say to you—something that should have been said long ago, had I not felt we understood each other as well without. Dearest Fanny, you love me, do you not?" I did not deny it—how could I? Edward was about to say something more, when we were interrupted by the approach of a servant, who came to announce my friend's arrival, and my mother's summons for me to return to the house. My cheeks were still dyed with blushes, and my heart beating wildly with delight when I greeted my friend, and hastened to conduct her to the room prepared for her. Perhaps a selfish consideration made me hurry her thither. I felt the imperative need of a few moments of solitude to relieve my swelling bosom of its burden of bliss by a shower of joyful tears. Happy, happy Fanny, to weep for too much joy—while so many, as I am told, weep tears of bitterness and sorrow.

May 6th, 1802.

I find my old friend but little improved since our school days. Indeed, I begin to understand her character for the first time, and she seems to me wanting both in head and heart. She has, however, grown personally very pretty. Her features are delicate, and her face would be really attractive had she more soul to animate it. Edward has scarce been civil to her, so inopportune does he deem her arrival. I must speak to him about it.

May 7th, 1802.

I was roused from my slumbers last night to attend my mother who was suddenly taken ill. Pray God no harm may come to her, for she is not strong, and I fear the attack is serious. The physician looks grave. Edward is bright and hopeful. He cheers and sustains me. What a comfort to have him near, in this time of trial, to rest my weak, fearful heart on his strong, manly one. He is all tenderness and devotion, and begs me to make him useful. I have commissioned him to amuse and entertain Julia for

me, so as to release me from all care on her account, and leave me free to devote all my time to my dear mother. I fear the poor girl finds the house intolerably dull and lonely.

May 10th, 1802.

My mother continues very ill. I have not left her room for two days, and should sink under the fatigue and anxiety I am enduring, but for the cheering words now and then exchanged with Edward at the door of mother's room. His early morning visit after the long, weary night, is like cordial to my fainting spirit.

May 12th, 1802.

My mother is a little better to-day, we think, but the physician scarce bids us hope yet. I have not yet heard Edward's knock this morning, and it is now ten o'clock—what can detain him?

If my mother continues to improve I think I shall venture down stairs this evening, after I have made her comfortable for the night.

May 13th, 1802.

My mother was better last night, and about nine o'clock, having dressed myself with some care, I went down to the parlor. I did not find Edward and Julia there as I expected; they were walking in the garden in the moonlight. I would have joined them there had I felt strong enough, but the care and want of rest I have been undergoing have left me very weak and tremulous, and I waited their return where I was. It was not very long before they came—only half an hour by my watch, though it seemed much longer to me.

Edward seemed very glad to see me down stairs again—he said so again and again—yes, he was truly glad to see me, and I—I could have fallen on his neck and wept, so moved was I at being again beside him.

I expressed to Julia my regret at having been obliged to deprive myself of so much of her society during her visit, and she replied, that owing to that circumstance she proposed giving herself the pleasure of extending the time of her stay some days longer than she at first intended.

I tried to reply civilly, but I fear the inhospitality of my heart was betrayed by my manner. In truth, I heartily wish for her departure. Her stay at this time is inconvenient, and there is little congeniality in our natures.

May 15th, 1802.

My mother continues to improve, though very slowly, and she still engrosses much of my time and attention. My thoughts meanwhile are elsewhere. I fear I am growing suspicious. Suspicious—the meanest of the vices, which I have ever so despised, let me guard against it.

I noted Julia well last last night as she sat at the piano singing. I cannot sing. She is fair and graceful. To me her face wants expression, yet she has beauty, and beauty of that kind, which I think I have heard is almost irresistibly alluring to men.

Edward obeys my injunction to amuse and entertain her to the letter. But what right have I to be annoyed by that? It is my late vigils that have made me nervous and low-spirited. I will banish distressing thoughts and go to bed.

May 17th, 1802.

Julia wears her fair hair in long curls, and Edward admires light curls, I heard him telling her so to-day. My hair is black and strait, and I wear it in braids. I am looking very badly; pale and haggard. I have not slept any for three nights.

May 18th, 1802.

Oh, I am very wretched! Julia is luring my Edward's heart away from me! I am sure of it. I see it, and am powerless to counteract the spell she is casting over him. She is striving by every charm and fascination she possesses to win him. She does not—she cannot, of course, know my prior claims on his affections. She cannot know that her success would break my heart. She is my old schoolmate and friend. I will be open with her, and tell her all. I will throw myself on her generosity. This is no time for pride or false delicacy. My whole earthly happiness is at stake.

Same day, later.

I have seen Julia. In a passion of emotion I threw myself at her feet—told her all, and besought her to be merciful—to spare me the love I valued more than life. She smiled sweetly—oh, she has a very sweet smile—and asked if any engagement existed between Edward and myself. None I acknowledged as yet.

"Then," she continued, playfully, "we stand on equal ground. Let her who wins wear."

Her cold levity chilled me, but I mastered my rising pride enough to say,

"You do not take into account that my affections are already irrevocably pledged."

"And you do not take into account," she replied, playfully, touching my cheek with her fan, "that it would be a disappointment to me to fail of my conquest. I suppose you know Mr. Clifton is what is called a good match?"

Disgusted with the cold sneer conveyed in that last question, and with her calculating heartlessness, I left her without another word. How mortifying to have vainly displayed the inmost secret of my heart to the unfeeling gaze of such a woman.

May 19th, 1802.

Oh, Edward, Edward, you are breaking my very heart! Was it then all a delusion—all that I fancied? Was I the dupe of my own misconceptions? Were all those attentions—looks—tones, which won my foolish heart, mere gallantries, magnified by my vanity into evidences of a deep affection? Surely the past has been a delusion on my part—he could never have been so cruelly fickle. It has been a sweet, unreal dream, which has faded and left me, oh, so wretched. Yet no—I cannot have been so grossly self-deceived—that walk in the maple avenue, when he looked in my face, and took my hand in his and declared his love—ah, no—I remember; he did not declare it; he was about to do so, as I fancied, when we were interrupted by Julia's arrival. Even *then* she came between us, and arrested the utterance of words which I would now give worlds to have heard, were it but to satisfy the doubts of my wounded pride.

Ah, would she but leave us even now, it might not be too late; I ~~would~~ so strive to win him back I could not but succeed. Why does she thus linger here, self-invited, sucking the life-blood from my heart? I can bear everything better than her smile. When she turns toward me in my anguish with that sweet, placid, satisfied smile, my heart fills with bitterness toward her. A fierce wish for revenge possesses me. I long for a day to come when I may cause her to feel what I am now suffering, and let her see if I cannot then smile in *my* turn.

God forgive me, I am very wicked, and very, very unhappy.

May 20th, 1802.

My mother, at my suggestion, intimated as delicately as possible to Julia the propriety of her return home. It was my last hope, and has failed! Julia has left us indeed, but Edward—yes, *my* Edward, departed with her—to escort her home, he told my mother; but he will not return. I did not even see him before he went, I was too much agitated to attempt it; no message left for me. It is all—all over. Oh, the anguish of a breaking heart!

I am almost distracted, and have a dreadful headache and fever. I believe I am going to be ill.

June 30th, 1802.

For six weeks I have lain dangerously ill. Delirious most of the time. Perhaps the wish I had to die made my recovery more difficult. I know nothing as yet, save that Edward has not been here to make inquiries about me during my illness. Is not that enough?

July 10th, 1802.

I begin to see my friends again, and go out a little on the pleasant days.

I have had no difficulty in learning all I wished to know. No one, but my mother, suspects my secret, and the name which is never uttered between us, is carelessly mentioned by strangers constantly. The latest news, which every one discusses in my sick room to entertain me with, is the engagement of Julia Gray and Edward Clifton.

June 1st, 1802.

My illness has left me so weak, that I am physically incapable of the violent emotions, which have shaken my being to its centre. This is well for me, and enables me better to act my part.

Their wedding day is fixed—the first day of July. I am invited.

London, August 8th, 1802.

I am travelling with my mother for my health. Once how eagerly I longed to take this trip—now, all places are alike hateful to me.

I see by the papers and letters which arrived to-day by the brig *Britania*, after a speedy passage, that the marriage took place at the appointed time.

Rome, Nov. 1st, 1802.

There is something in the atmosphere of Italy, which falls like balm on wounded hearts. My health begins to improve, and I think I am somewhat stronger, mentally, as well as physically. Could I only banish the ever present memory of the past!

We shall sojourn here, and in Florence and Venice, during the winter months.

My mother is well, and is my most tender, sympathizing comforter. This she makes me feel in a thousand ways, though the subject which occupies the thoughts of both, never crosses our lips.

Switzerland, May 1st, 1803.

My nineteenth birthday. What changes since the last! Can it be but one short year? I have lived since then an eternity of woe. How fearful an amount of suffering one can endure, and yet live on. Does sorrow *never* kill?

Switzerland, May 15th, 1803.

We are still in Switzerland, and purpose remaining among these glorious mountains at least a month longer. My mother thinks the pure, bracing air beneficial to my health. The autumn we shall spend in travelling through Germany. The winter we pass in Paris.

Paris, Jan. 15th, 1804.

My trip has benefitted me much, both as to

health and spirits. My appearance has also greatly improved. I find myself a belle in Paris. I have had several eligible offers of marriage, but though I am making a great effort to shake off the thralldom of a misplaced affection, enough still remains of the old spell to make me shrink from any overtures of this nature.

Oh, Edward—husband of another—in your happy life of wedded love, do you ever pause to think of the wretched girl whose happiness you so thoughtlessly wrecked. Edward, you abused a trusting, loving heart.

Saratoga, May 1st, 1804.

Another birthday, my twentieth. Thank God for the comparative tranquillity I am now enjoying, compared with my state of mind last year.

My mother and I intend spending our summer here; in the fall we shall go to New York city, and board there during the winter. Next spring we are to return to our old home at Rockland.

I find myself much admired here, and it is pleasing to my vanity, once a little wounded perhaps, when another and deeper wound was given.

Saratoga, May 7th, 1804.

I have seen him—he is here! I met him while walking to-day with a party of friends. I am thankful he did not observe me, for I was taken unawares, and greatly agitated. I would not for world's he had seen it. I learn he is at this house with his wife and child. His child! how strangely it sounds, and I was not before aware of her existence. But away with thoughts I should not harbor. I must be strong and self-possessed, and guard against appearing even to remember the past.

May 8th, 1804.

I met him last night, and am entirely satisfied with my manner to him. I dreaded this meeting, mistrusting my powers of self-control; but my self-possession was perfect. I addressed him with easy nonchalance, as though he were merely an old acquaintance. I do not think I even blushed. I did not know I was so good an actress.

Unless I am mistaken, some memories of the past still cling to Edward Clifton. He seemed much agitated—quite overcome at meeting me last night. I think he was also struck by my appearance, but that may be but a vain fancy.

May 9th, 1804.

I have looked again upon the face of my old schoolmate and former rival, Julia. I find her greatly changed. She is in ill health, and much faded. She has lost her bloom, and with it much of her beauty. Her face looks careworn

and peevish. People say the union between her and Mr. Clifton has not proved a happy one. Poor woman; so she too has known sorrow; and should not I, who have learned so well what that word means, feel even for her? I had suffered else in vain. My heart forgot its old bitterness as I gazed at her pale, unhappy face. I remembered only that we were fellow sufferers. I looked at her child with tender interest. A pretty little thing, about a year old. I hear her name is Fanny.

May 12th, 1804.

I can truly say I do not seek to attract him, yet Mr. Clifton seems unable to withdraw himself from my presence. He seeks a thousand pretences to approach me, and though repelled by the grave reserve of my manner, he seems at the same time irresistibly attracted, as if by some spell, to ever seek my society. Even when at a distance, I observe that his eyes are always fixed upon me, and go where I will they follow me.

For my part, I am pleased to find that his actual presence tends in a great measure, to break the charm which once bound me, and dispels the halo of glory with which fancy and memory had adorned the hero of my life's first dream.

May 15th, 1804.

Mr. Clifton still continues to cross my path, and his eyes, with their strange burning look, to haunt me. I am annoyed and distressed. Julia looks jealous and wretched. Heaven knows I would not willingly cause one pang to be added to those she has already suffered. If there ever was a period when I felt a desire to avenge on her the anguish she once caused me, the time has long since passed, and I rejoice to say, a better spirit has succeeded that of angry bitterness which I so long entertained. Sorrow, I trust, has not touched me quite in vain.

I feel it is no longer right for me to remain here, and have prevailed on my mother to leave the day after to-morrow. We shall go to Newport for the rest of the season.

Newport, May 25th, 1804.

We left Saratoga on Wednesday last, as we intended. Contrary to my wish, Mr. Clifton heard from some quarter of our contemplated departure. As I stood on the piazza talking with some friends the evening before we left, he approached me, and whispered a request that I would grant him a few minutes private conversation. I refused to do so. He persisted, saying he had something of vital importance to us both to communicate. I replied, with some hauteur, that I knew of no subject of common interest between us. As I was turning away, he grasped

my arm almost with violence, and drawing me a little aside, whispered between his teeth,

"Proud, beautiful woman, why trample on the heart at your feet? Was not repentance already bitter enough?"

I withdrew myself decidedly enough from his detaining grasp, and turned again to my friends with a light laugh and shrug, as though regarding his words as the merest gallantry which I knew better than to believe. It was my revenge for what I had suffered from making a contrary mistake some two years ago. After all it was a mean triumph.

Newport, May 31st, 1804.

My thoughts ever revert to my recent meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Clifton at Saratoga. Of course it is but natural they should, considering how powerfully those two individuals have influenced my destiny. The part I have lately been called upon to act, was a difficult one, and I am glad I was able to meet it so well. For, notwithstanding all my bravery, my heart knows its own weakness, and there were times when the well remembered tones of that once, so much loved voice, stirred my breast with emotions I fancied dead forever. More than once, when he was near me, I felt that same delicious feeling of peacefulness and calm steal over me, which used to characterize the love with which he inspired me. How tenaciously does woman's nature cling to emotions which have once made part of her being.

For my own sake I rejoice at this meeting. Nothing else could so effectually have freed me from the enchantment which enthralled me. Since the renewal of our acquaintance, Mr. Clifton has sunk immeasurably in my opinion; and notwithstanding the confession I have just been making, I can truly say, I no longer either love, or respect him. It was hard for me to part with little Fanny; my heart yearns to the child with a strange tenderness.

A Mr. D'Estelle, a young man of fortune and promise, has followed me hither from Saratoga, and yesterday addressed me. He is a noble youth, and it grieved me to pain him by a refusal.

September 1st, 1804.

I have just been inexpressibly shocked by hearing of Julia's sudden death at Saratoga. Her health had never been good since the birth of her child, but no one imagined her so near her end. God forgive me the bitterness I once felt for her, and any pain I may have caused her.

New York, June 25th, 1805.

I received yesterday a letter from Mr. Clifton,

in which he made me an offer of his hand. He declared most solemnly that he had never truly loved any one but myself; averring that the sudden passion he experienced for Julia was but a passing whim, speedily repented of, and for which he had done most bitter penance.

His letter was eloquent and passionate, but it could not move me. The day has come when I rejoice at the destiny (once so bitterly resisted) which separated me from such a man as Edward Clifton.

I replied to his letter, briefly, and firmly rejecting his suit, without reference to the past.

New York, Feb. 1st, 1805.

I was surprised yesterday by a visit from Mr. Clifton. He came to urge his suit in person. He sought by every persuasive argument, by every skillful appeal to feelings he once knew so well how to sway, to change my decision. But the enchanter's wand was broken; his words had still power to move, but not to influence me. I was gentle, but firm. Only once he roused me to a bitter answer; it was when he said,

"Fanny, you once confessed you loved me."

I remembered well the time when the confession to which he alluded had been made; and it had often touched my pride to think that I had allowed him to win my secret from me, before he had betrayed his own. His allusion to a circumstance to which I was so morbidly sensitive, wounded me in a tender spot, and I replied sharply,

"It was when I did not know you, sir."

The whole interview was most painful to me; painful, because of the necessary recurrence to past scenes, to which no philosophy or reasoning can enable me to allude without agitation, and most distressing to me on account of the disappointment I was occasioning Mr. Clifton. Yet now that it is over, I am glad to have had this conversation. There is no opening light for future misunderstandings, or groundless hopes on his part. He is himself convinced of the finality of my answer.

And, so a long, sad chapter of my life has closed, and the leaf is turned over.

New York, May 1st, 1805.

Mr. D'Estelle, the gentleman who followed me to Newport from Saratoga, and who at that time addressed me, has renewed his suit. My mother is his warm friend and advocate. He is handsome, talented, and in every respect a noble and excellent young man. He is most worthy of my affections—if I could but command them. But though early and deep wounds have closed, the suffering they caused me seems to have altered my very nature. The heart once well nigh

broken, refuses again to respond to emotions which so nearly proved fatal to it. Is my experience that of all who have loved and suffered deeply? Can love, deep and passionate as that I once inherited, ever be felt twice by the same individual? I doubt it. And can a woman who has known what love really is, remain satisfied by its cold counterfeit—friendship? I dare not make the trial.

Another birthday—my twenty-first.

Rockland, April 2nd, 1808.

Edward and I met yesterday once more—for the last time. Yes, it is all over—he is no more.

The tears which are now falling like rain, as I think of him, prove how impossible it is for a woman who has truly loved, ever to tear from her heart *entirely* sentiments which were twined into its very fibres. She may think, again and again, that she has torn them up utterly and cast them from her, but some little root remains from which the plant germinate anew and throws up branches.

Edward was brought home yesterday fatally injured, by having been violently thrown from a vehicle which he was driving. Feeling that his hours were numbered he caused me to be sent for.

I instantly obeyed the summons, but unnerved by so sudden and terrible a calamity, I stood beside him too much overcome to be able to control my feelings. Edward was also deeply moved. With his last breath he declared his undying love for me; and implored my forgiveness of the past.

It touched me to see the strong man so humbled and so helpless—to see the stamp of death on that still young brow once so dear to me; the love I had so sternly bade die in my bosom—which I *thought* dead burst into life anew—I

clasped my arms around his neck, and with bursting tears sobbed forth the confession of the deep, unconquerable love with which my heart had ever clung to him.

It was a wild, perhaps an imprudent burst of emotion—for I should certainly have repented it had Edward recovered; as it is, I rejoice to have cheered his last hours by words of love and forgiveness.

He commended his little orphan daughter to my care, and I accepted the solemn trust. She is henceforth my child.

Edward's last words were—

"Kiss me, Fanny—our first kiss. It has been all wrong."

Yes, it has been all—all wrong. But let the past henceforth be the past. To the future and little Fanny I look for comfort.

Rockland, May 1st, 1808.

My birthday, and also little Fanny's. Fanny's fifth, and my twenty-fourth. Heaven bless the darling child. From the first moment I saw her my heart yearned to her, but I little thought how near and dear she was to become to me. She is the light and joy of the house, and my mother has grown so fond of her that I only fear she will spoil her by her indulgence.

I have resolved positively and finally never to marry, and have been happier since making this decision.

Rockland, May 1st, 1809.

My child grows and improves. She is a most winning, affectionate little thing, and fills my very heart with tenderness by the love she ever manifests for me. Truly are little children God's own especial messengers, and such Fanny has been to me. It is only since she has sojourned, an angel in our dwelling, that I have began to see things aright. She is my teacher—my joy—my consoler for the past, my hope for the future.

WRITING A STORY.

BY CARRIE CLOVER.

"Oh, dear me," said Fanny Leslie, with a yawn, "I wish I knew what to do with myself. I wonder, cousin Kate, if mamma thought we were adamantine, when she requested us to remain with papa in the city until the middle of July. Oh, Fan, don't complain. I think of poor papa and brother Charlie, who instead of lying on cool sofas, in a darkened room, and perusing the 'Ladies' National,' as we can do, have to stay down town in that oven of an office, or what is far worse, to traverse the scorching pavements beneath the glaring rays of a noonday sun."

"Yes, Katie, I know it all, dear, but if I only had something to do! Now our piano has gone to the country, I can't practice. And as to reading, I've read every readable book in the house."

"Oh, Fanny! I don't believe that. But I'll tell you what we will do. Oh! such a bright thought! We'll write a story for Mr. Peterson!"

"Write a story, cousin Kate!" and Fanny's little figure stripped gaily across the room. "Well, that is a bright thought, I'll acknowledge. But, Kate, how do you know that Mr. Peterson will publish it?"

"I'll risk that," and Katie laughed too. "I'll run up to the library and get pencil and paper."

"Wait a moment, Katie, I'll tell you what will do; I am too lazy to write this warm day, so I'll compose, and you shall become my amanuensis. I shall feel quite dignified when I see my story published, and I'll tell mamma, (oh, won't mamma be glad? for she thinks I cannot do anything myself,) the talented authoress, Miss—Miss—what is a pretty name, Kate? Oh, Carrie Clover! that'll do—is her own daughter!"

"But you won't be doing it all yourself, Miss Fanny. I shall do the writing. But never mind, Fan, I'll be generous for once, and give you all the credit."

I wish you could see those two cousins, Mr. Editor. There they sit. Fanny Leslie in an oaken chair of antique architecture, and Katie at her feet, with a portfolio in her lap. The fine point of her tiny gold pencil, vibrating just within a hair's-breadth of the spotless sheet.

"Well, Fan, I am waiting."

"So am I, Katie, for Mr. Watts says we must

only write when we have a 'flow of ideas,' and I don't happen to have an identical one in my head just at present."

"Well, then, I'll begin for you. '*Once upon a time many centuries ago.*' There, let go of my hand, I'm not writing it down."

"I should hope not, such a prosy beginning as that is. Now, just stop composing. I believe I've got an idea in my head, but you must write fast, for I have most forgotten it already."

"Far away over the blue waters of the ocean, there stood a vine-clad cottage, surrounded by a dense forest. Within those cottage walls there dwelt an aged hermit." (Got that all written down, Kate?) "Well, this venerable solitudinarian——"

"Oh, that's too long a word for a Magazine. Pray, how do you spell it, Fan?"

"Never mind, by-and-by you can bring down 'Webster's Quarto Edition.' It lies on the library table. But don't interrupt me again, or I shall lose the thread of my story. Where did I leave off, Katy?"

"This venerable soli—something."

"Had an only child, a daughter, who was beautiful past description."

"There, Kate, now you can describe her!"

"I shant, Fan! Oh! what a story. If Mr. Peterson could only see that, he would take the express train this very afternoon, in order to twine an immortal laurel wreath around your fair brow, with his own hands."

"Well, never mind, Katie. I'll do better next winter, when it is a little colder; just reach me that palm-leaf fan. Oh, I'll tell you, let's give up the 'Forester's Daughter,' and write a story about ourselves?"

"Of us! That's a preposterous idea. Why, I never had a hair-breadth escape in my life. Nor you either, I don't believe."

"Pray, what a short-sighted memory you have! Don't you remember the time that I fell out of the row-boat, and cousin Harry nearly lost his cap, in trying to save me from a watery grave?"

The little lady at her feet laughed outright at this "perilous adventure."

"And even if Harry had lost his cap, Fan, that wouldn't be worth putting in a printed story!"

"Well, supposing it is not, then we will have to 'make up one.' For instance, have some 'Lady Alice' for a heroine, who has never existed, and never will. Now take up your pencil, while I dictate."

"The 'Lady Alice' was an expert horsewoman, and used to scour the country for miles around. Her black beaver hat and feathers, and neatly fitting dark-green riding-habit, gave her the appearance of a 'wood-nymph.' Her eyes were dark, her hair black as the raven's wing. Her figure was of faultless symmetry. And her manners possessed all the ease and grace of a 'high born' beauty. She daily traversed the 'lonely forest,' with her little snow-white pony as her only companion——"

"Now, Katie, you needn't write so fast, for I am going to stop particularizing, there's another big word for you to hunt up?"

"One day, however, the 'Lady Alice' ventured too far. Whilst gazing back after a woodpecker, Pompey (that was her pony's name,) carried his lovely burden to the very verge of a yawning chasm. In another moment, the Lady Alice would have been precipitated into the gloomy ravine beneath. But her preserver was nigh; one that she dreamed not of; 'Don Chevalier de Quixoto,' a nobleman of the Spanish

court. Seeing a lady in imminent danger of losing her life, he sprang from his horse with true Spanish chivalry, hastened to bear her senseless form (she had fainted, of course,) to a grassy hillock near by."

"Bravo! Fan! only I can't write quite as fast as you talk. Now you must finish this—what do you call it? 'Romance of the Rhone,' or the 'Knight of Venice,' in double quick time, for my arm aches with writing."

"Well, now you shall see how concise I can be when I try."

"When the 'Lady Alice' left her father's castle that day, she had in her possession a little silver riding-whip, and a whole heart; but when she returned, she had lost both."

"That will do, Fan! Capital!" said cousin Kate, clapping her hands. "But what became of Pompey? Was he killed?"

"Yes—no—I think not. I'll decide by-and-by."

"But, Fan, do you think Mr. Peterson would publish such a story as that? It has neither beginning, middle, nor end?"

"Oh, he can ask his own pleasure about that, 'cousin mine.' Beside, perhaps, I'll continue it when the weather becomes a little colder; so just ring the bell for some ice-water, Katie."

THE WIFE'S MISSION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE VALLEY FARM," "DORA ATHEBTON," &C.

I.

THE clock had long since struck midnight, yet still the young wife waited for her husband.

It was the first time he had ever left her alone in the evening. They had been married three months,—three happy, blissful months, the young wife had thought till now!

"I will not be in till late," he had said, on leaving after dinner. "Two or three of my old, bachelor friends are in town, and I have promised to take supper with them. It would be as well, perhaps," he continued, glancing another way, "not to wait up for me."

At first the evening was not so lonely as she had expected. She brought out her husband's slippers, arranged his dressing-gown, and drew his favorite arm-chair up before the fire. "He will not be out late, after all," she said, as she did this. "He thinks to surprise me." And smiling to herself, in the consciousness of having all ready for him, she sat down, took up the last book he had given her, and began quietly to read.

Eight, and then nine o'clock struck, when finding he did not come, she rose with a sigh, and laid aside her volume. "He will be late after all," she said. "But I suppose he has so much to talk about." And with this excuse for his delay, she sighed again, and after awhile resumed her book.

The young wife was still full of romance. Idolized by her family, and with no experience of life beyond the loving circle of her early home, she had married with the too common dream that existence was never to be darkened by a cloud. Her husband was from a distant city, a man of fortune, finished in his manners, and with a singularly handsome person. Willingly she had left all to follow him. But now, sitting thus alone, a feeling gradually arose in her heart, that he ought not to have left her. She was ashamed of it at first, and strove to conquer it; she had no right to expect him, she said, till ten o'clock: it was natural, perhaps, for husbands to wish occasionally to spend an evening with their bachelor friends.

But it was a weary time till ten o'clock. She often found her thoughts wandering. At last the clock struck.

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"Now he will surely come," she exclaimed, throwing down her book: and rising, she went to the window in order to watch for him. It was bright moonlight without, and every one approaching could be distinctly seen. But still her husband did not come.

For nearly half an hour she remained looking out. Gradually her feelings changed. "He does not love me as he did," she said, "or he wouldn't neglect me so."

Finally, yielding to pride, she closed the shutters, and again took up her book. "When he comes in," she said, "he shall find me reading, as if his absence had not concerned me."

But she could only pretend to read. Her eyes followed the characters, while her thoughts were with her husband. Again and again she turned back, determined to keep the sense in her mind, yet as often she discovered, after a page or two, that she had utterly failed.

The clock striking eleven roused her. Her thoughts now took a new turn. Something must have happened, she said, and she reproached herself for having been vexed. Perhaps he had been taken sick on his way home. Perhaps he had been run over. Perhaps, for she had heard of such things, he had been knocked down, robbed, and left senseless and bleeding.

These fears having once taken hold of her, she could not rest quietly in the house. Going to the street door, she stood there, unbonneted, eagerly looking up and down the street. Had she known where to go, she would have set forth at once: but she reflected that, if she left the house, her husband might be brought back in her absence. The streets were now almost deserted, and the moon had sunk behind the rooftops, so that silence and comparative darkness filled the long and ghostly thoroughfare. But occasionally a step would be heard approaching. As it slowly came nearer and nearer her suspense would be almost intolerable. Yet when it arrived, and the form of a stranger only was seen, she could have welcomed even suspense again.

At last the watchman came along, eyeing her so curiously that she withdrew, but only to walk up and down the hall almost frantically. Every moment she expected to see her husband brought

home a corpse. Her imagination pictured him in a dozen dreadful ways; crushed, disfigured, bloody; perhaps still sensible, though unable to speak; perhaps, oh! cruel, cruel fate, speechless forever, and with eyes closed in death. Tears and sobs alternated as she traversed the hall and parlor, wringing her hands, and praying with wild, imploring words.

Thus midnight came. She went again to the door, for she could not keep away. The moon was now down, and the street entirely dark; the roll of carriages was heard no more; not even a step echoed on the silence. She passed out, and standing on the stoop, strove, by shading her eyes, to peer into the gloom. But still there were no signs of her husband.

Her anxiety now rose to positive agony. She could not keep still. From hall to stoop, and from stoop to hall, she passed and repassed, finding no alleviation for her fears except in action. Once she rushed up stairs to get her bonnet and shawl, but remembering, while she was putting them on with trembling hands, how mad would be the attempt to find her husband in that great city, she flung them down with a burst of impotent tears, feeling as if her heart was breaking from the very impossibility of her doing anything.

In this state of mind, more than two additional hours passed. At last, when three o'clock had nearly come, a step was heard in the street. The wife was already at the door, and listened with suspended pulse as the echoing tread approached. Was it his? Yes! And with this conviction she sprang forward.

But what makes her, all at once, recoil? Why does she start back, her face blanched, her figure motionless as if turned to stone?

She has seen a maudlin countenance, which is not that of her husband, and yet is: and, on the instant, the dreadful truth flashes upon her, that she has married a drunkard.

II.

"WHAT the deuce is the matter with you?" said Mr. Herenand to his young wife, two days afterward. "Can't a man get a civil word, or even look out of you?" And finding that there was no reply, he continued, "Since I must speak plainly, you're sulky, I suppose, about the way I came home in, the other night. But egad! you must have been tied pretty tightly to your mother's apron strings, if you haven't learned that such things are small matters."

Mr. Herenand was rich, and well educated, and had always moved in what is called "the best society." But he had been the furthest

possible from what is characterized as a "domestic" man. His mother had long been dead, and his sisters being gay, fashionable girls, there was nothing to keep him at home in the evening. His time consequently had been spent between the theatre, billiard-saloon and club-room. Convinced in his habits, he not unfrequently indulged to excess in wine; but as all his gay friends did the same, he thought little of it.

Of women in the abstract he had no very high opinion. What he had seen of them had been chiefly among the worst of the sex. He had married his wife principally for her pretty face, and had thought himself a miracle of devotion, because, for three whole months, he had never gone out in the evening, except with her. It is true that a round of social entertainments, intended to welcome the young bride to a strange city, had monopolized so many of these evenings, that, on their few disengaged ones, he was glad to stay at home in quiet. A fortnight's cessation of these parties had ennuied him however.

The young wife had been educated to believe intemperance the vilest of vices, and, therefore, when she saw her husband inebriated, horror and disgust seized her by turns. At first she felt as if she could never forgive him. But her woman's heart began, at last, to plead in his favor: and she rose from her sleepless couch persuaded that it would be cruel not to pardon him, if he showed penitence, especially as it was probably his first offence.

Poor thing! She was destined to be bitterly deceived. She could not avoid a certain constraint in her manner, when her husband descended to breakfast, at a late hour. This he noticed, and took offence at. He sat down sullenly. The meal passed in silence; and when he had finished, he rose and left the house without a word.

Mrs. Herenand thought, for awhile, she would die from mortification and rage. In her days of courtship, the slightest shade upon her face had been sufficient to awaken her lover's anxiety. Was it for this she had left her native city, her circle of admiring friends, her loving family? Had she exchanged a mother's tender care for neglect and insult?

She had a high, proud heart, and she resolved that the criminal should bitterly repent his conduct. Accordingly, when he came home to dinner, she had nothing to say, beyond the necessary phrases of the table. A statue of ice could not have been more repellant than she, in her cold, angry dignity.

Mr. Herenand looked up with some surprise. Educated as he had been, he could not compre-

hence what he had done to merit either the reserve of the morning, or the present still more chilling demeanor. In turn he grew angry.

Two days had passed, when his rage, as we have seen, had found vent in words.

Mrs. Herenand, meantime, was a thousand fold more indignant than at first.

"Sir!" she said, drawing herself up haughtily, "speak respectfully of my mother, at least. Whatever you say, or do to me, I'll not have her insulted."

The husband gave a low, prolonged whistle.

"How dare you?" cried his wife, passionately stamping her foot. "Didn't I tell you I'd not have my mother insulted? Nor shall you look at me in that insolent manner either."

An oath rose to the husband's lips, and even found expression, though he would have considered it very ill-bred to swear at any woman but his wife. He muttered also something about termagants, and what sort of a home they made for a man.

"What's that you say?" said his wife, now thoroughly aroused. "Something about making a man's home a ———, I won't speak the wicked word. Nice language for a lady's ears," she continued, contemptuously. "But its such, I suppose, as you learn from your boon companions."

She paused, but he made no answer. In fact he was cowed for the moment. He had thought he had married a Desdemona. But he was asking himself now if it was not rather a Lady Macbeth.

"What else ought a man's house to be," she resumed, passionately, "if this is the way wives are treated? I wonder there's a quiet home any where," she continued, her eyes blazing; and she broke off abruptly with a bitter laugh.

It was well she did, for she was becoming hysterical. Poor, motherless, inexperienced child, almost frantic with outraged love and shame, we can scarcely censure her that she raved thus.

But she had done incalculable harm. Her reproaches had cut to the quick. In his then state of mind, the culprit was not unwilling to have an excuse for anger.

"Well then, madam," he said, coolly buttoning up his coat, "if you don't choose to make my home comfortable, I'll go where I can find one." And with a brutal oath, he wheeled about, and left the room.

III.

THAT night Mr. Herenand came home intoxicated again. The young wife did not sit up for him this time; but she paced her chamber till he came, wringing her hands; and when she heard

him stumble into bed, in the adjoining room, she burst into tears of passionate grief and rage. Her heart was torn by conflicting emotions all this while. She began to fear she had done wrong, but her pride would not let her acknowledge it even to herself, much less to him.

In the morning, when she woke from a feverish sleep, she learned that her husband had already gone out. She saw nothing of him that day. He came home, some time before midnight; but, as she had already shut herself up in her chamber, there was no opportunity for explanation, even if he had wished it.

Thus things went on for days, weeks, and even months. Oh! what a miserable household it was, at least for one, for the other was rarely at home. The young wife would not yield, for, whenever she thought of it, the fact that originally he was in fault recurred to her, steeling her heart as well as blinding her judgment. Meantime she had to keep her sorrow secret. It was not a grief that could be told. Yet often her heart almost broke under it. Then again her proud spirit rose. "She did not care," she said to herself, "he had treated her brutally, yes! brutally; and he might go where he pleased, do what he pleased, it was nothing, it *should* be nothing to her. Other men might kill their wives by such conduct. Thank heaven! she was made of stouter stuff."

But gradually her strength gave way in this struggle. She spent half her time in tears. Often she was tempted to fly to her mother, so much did she yearn for sympathy. At last she remembered her Bible, which, for many years, she had almost neglected. The gentle spirit of that book, particularly of the four gospels, insensibly melted her, and changed the whole current of her thoughts.

One night, as she lay on her pillow, an inward monitor spoke to her, "Was she wholly free from blame?" said the voice. "Had she not, as a wife, taken her husband for good or ill? What did this imply? Was she doing *her* duty, by driving him away with her upbraidings? Did *his* criminality justify wrong on her part? Would her anger make things better? Had it not, on the contrary, made them worse?"

She burst into a passion of tears. Falling on her knees, she solemnly pledged herself to recover her husband, if a change in her conduct could do it.

Had the young wife been less truly a woman she would never have come to this conclusion. She would still have hardened her heart. But the diviner qualities were large and vital in her character, and these had triumphed at last over

the more stubborn and haughty elements of her nature.

"Father in heaven," she cried, "I acknowledge my error; Thou hast set the example, in Thy dear Son, of measureless forbearance and love. Shall I, to whom so much has been forgiven, not forgive also? Shall I drive the husband, I have sworn to love and honor, into causes more evil than before, and only because he has wronged me once:—when Thou hast died for those who have wronged Thee a thousand times, and who cruelly mock Thee still? Oh! I see now," she cried, "that it is more Christ-like to act the diviner part, and to win back the erring by the very magnitude of our love and sacrifices for them. Here then I dedicate myself to this task," she continued, solemnly, lifting her streaming eyes to heaven, "if Thou wilt but sanctify the act, and give me the strength I need to persevere to the end."

She rose a changed being. The mystery of life had been revealed to her. She knew her mission on earth, and prepared, martyr-like, to go forward in it. She had recognized the Cross she was to bear.

IV.

AND it proved a Cross indeed! At first her altered demeanor produced no impression on her husband except contemptuous surprise. A less selfish, or less haughty man, would have been easily melted by her meekness, her forbearance, her evident efforts to please. But his heart, never very gentle, had become like the "nether mill-stone." He had expected a slave in a wife, and finding himself disappointed, had vowed to break her heart. So his feelings were those of gratulation, rather than affection, at these signs of what he thought her submission. Sardonic as it was; there is no exaggeration in this. There are such men—brutes, almost devils.

At times his wife almost gave up. Many was the bitter hour she spent alone in tears in her chamber. Often she rose from a sick bed to dress herself in his favorite colors and welcome him with a cheerful smile. She selected for the table the delicacies she knew he liked best. She informed herself on the subjects she thought would be most apt to please him. She played his favorite airs. Occasionally he would relent a little, hard and resolute as he was; but it was only a momentary gleam of sunshine.

Without her Bible she would have given up. But she found, the more she studied its spirit, that, if love would not win back her husband, anger would fail even more utterly. The whole scheme of Redemption rose before her, not only

as the great fact of the Gospel, but as the type, to all time, of the means to recover the lost. "Surely," she said, "if Christ submitted to be led like a lamb to the slaughter, and all to win a degraded and fallen world back to Him, ought not I to suffer all for my husband in hopes to touch his heart also."

And then she would add. "He is obdurate yet, because I irritated him so long. Had I begun earlier, he would have yielded before now."

Cruel as Mr. Herenand was he would have been softened, if it had not been for the influence of one of his wife's own sex. This abandoned creature had exercised a controlling influence over him previous to his marriage; but on that event he had shaken off the connexion; only, however, to resume it on the first quarrel with his bride. And now this vile wretch sought, by every act, to widen the breach, undoing, day by day, all that the wife had done.

"Can you go with me to —," said Mrs. Herenand, in her gentlest tones. "I have received a note saying that my friend, Mrs. Arlington, is dangerously ill and wishes to see me."

The place she mentioned was on the river, some twenty miles from the city. It would take only a day, and, for a moment, Mr. Herenand was tempted to say yes. For several days he had been touched by his wife's meekness, even almost to changing his conduct. But, just as he was on the point of agreeing, he remembered that he had an engagement to play a game of billiards for a bet, that very morning.

"No, Anne," he said, though with evident regret, "I can't go." It was the first time, for months, that he had used any but her last name, in addressing her; and it almost unnerved her. "But if you'll take the cars, on returning," he added, kindly, "I'll come for you."

"Thank you," faltered the wife. She could say no more, for her heart was full—full of gratitude to God and of visions of a happy future.

The invalid, however, was so loath to part with Mrs. Herenand, keeping hold of her hand, and asking her new questions continually, that the cars started before Mrs. Herenand reached the depot. There was a steamboat, which left half an hour later, but the disappointed wife, though she availed herself of this to return, could not keep down the rebellious regrets that her friend had prevented her from meeting her husband.

"He will be angry," she said. "Appearances will be against me, and he will hardly wait for an explanation. If it had happened, when all was well between us, the difference would not

have been so great. But now I fear he will not even come home."

She was filled with these thoughts, and was restraining her tears with difficulty, when, about half way to the city, the boat stopped at a landing. There was a large hotel there, with spacious grounds about it, celebrated as a resort for gay parties from the city. Looking up, at hearing boisterous laughter, what was Mrs. Herenand's amazement to behold her husband, evidently somewhat flushed with wine, leading on board a female, whose free demeanor and showy style of dress betokened too well her character.

Yes! the husband, after playing out his game of billiards, during which he had drank freely of champagne, had received a note from this bad woman asking him to accompany her on an excursion, and dine at the — hotel. He had been persuaded, in an evil hour, to go: and was now more excited with wine than before. Mrs. Herenand was not unknown by sight to this vile creature, who now fixing her bold eyes on the poor, fainting wife, gave a scornful laugh as she swept past, holding the husband tight to her arm.

The victim of this insult, the innocent wife, thought, for a moment, she would have died. Indignation and shame racked her heart. Then consciousness fled, for Nature was too weak for the struggle, and she sank back fainting. By this time, however, the wanton had carried off the husband to the upper deck, so that he heard nothing of the incident. In fact, not having happened to see his wife at all, he laughed and jested, all the way to the city, with that exuberant mirth which incipient intoxication produces.

That night, as Mrs. Herenand prayed in her deserted chamber, it required all her faith to make her believe in the Justice of God. "I who am, at least, striving to do right," she said, bitterly, "to be thrust aside for this creature—oh! it is too much." But prayer brought relief. She thought of the words of the Litany, "By thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion," and feeling that, with all her woes, she had suffered nothing like to Christ, she bowed in repentance.

V.

To do Mr. Herenand justice, he felt the acutest shame, when he heard that his wife had been on board the steamboat. But the tempter, who had led him astray, and who had seized the first favorable opportunity to acquaint him of a fact, which she knew could not be kept from him, and which she sought therefore to turn to her own purposes; this foul enchantress, we say, was at

hand to destroy any good effect which might have resulted from it. Besides, the offender was really ashamed to go home to his outraged wife. He did not believe she could forgive him. Thus, betwixt his own conscience and the artful hints of his companion, he was induced to plunge into a series of orgies, in which he strove at once to find amusement and to drown his own reproaches.

And now a great struggle arose in the heart of his wife. Hitherto, the alienation of herself and husband, though secretly whispered about, had never been made the subject of general gossip; but the conduct of Mr. Herenand now made himself and wife the theme of remark everywhere. The scandal even reached, in time, the distant city, where Mrs. Herenand's family resided; and a strong letter was received from her elder brother, its surviving head, urging her return to her mother's roof.

Should she go, and thus abandon all? Or should she still wait, hoping for the Prodigal's return? These were the questions that pressed themselves upon her. Pride, the wishes of her family, and often a feeling of despair, urged the former course. But the Bible told her that the latter was her duty. "My mission is to save my husband," she wrote back to her brother, "not to abandon him; and God helping me I will stay at my post." There have been martyrs, who have died at the stake, in whom heroism and religion were not higher than in her.

But her reply did not satisfy her relatives. Her brother was a man, who, as he himself said, "couldn't understand such whimsical conduct." Religion, in his estimation, consisted in going stately to church, in setting a good example before the world, and in appropriating a liberal sum annually to charitable purposes. He could travel the beaten round of acknowledged duties, but could neither undertake loftier ones, nor appreciate those who did. He thought his sister as infatuated as her husband was guilty: and resolving that she should not, in his own words, "make a fool of herself," he started to bring her home.

In this his mother was the only one who even attempted to oppose him. To her the conduct of her daughter was not wholly inexplicable. She felt, that, in similar circumstances, she might herself have acted in the same manner. But pity and love made her remonstrances with her son weak; and finally she suffered him to depart, with a message from herself to her child, recommending her return.

Against this new assault, which she had not expected, Mrs. Herenand knew not scarcely what

to do. Her angry and self-willed brother, not only positively insisted on her returning with him, but so represented their mother's sentiments, that the poor wife, who had hoped to be appreciated in that quarter at least, was led to believe that her surviving parent disapproved of her conduct. Fortunately her brother's position as a church member forbade the idea of a rencontre between him and her husband, else she would have had to fear a hostile meeting between them, as an additional ingredient in her cup of misery.

"I tell you," he said, vehemently, when he found that his sister still hesitated, "that you are the general laughing-stock. Even the men say you want spirit: and the women call you a dunce. You can only do one thing worse, and that is to follow your husband."

"And I am about to do that," was the mild reply. "I have just received sure intelligence that he is lying dangerously sick, with a contagious disorder, and that—that," she could not bring herself to pronounce the name that rose to her lips, but added, "in short he has been abandoned. I only waited for you to come in, dear brother, to go to him."

"Now this is madness," exclaimed her brother, when he had partially recovered from his amazement. "The villain should be left to die, like a rat in a hole: and even that is too good for him after what he has done to you."

The sister burst into tears.

"Oh! brother," she cried, "you a Christian, and speaking in that way. To whom much is forgiven, from them much will be required. I feel that, but for me, my husband might never have gone so far astray; and if by flying to him now, I may recover him to the paths of virtue, how will I thank God."

As she uttered these words, with clasped hands, her streaming eyes directed above, she looked a saint. Her brother was touched. He made no effort to remonstrate further with her; but, after a pause, said,

"Since you are resolved, I will do all I can to avoid scandal. It is my duty to do so. Nay! no expostulation, I gave way to you in one matter, and you must and shall give way to me in this. I will have Mr. Herenand brought here. He shall be nursed in his own house, if his wife is to nurse him at all. My sister," he added, emphatically, "shall never contaminate herself by following him to a wanton's home."

"Go at once, dear James," said the wife, not trusting herself to say more. "Every minute is critical. And I will bless you, as God will, I know."

VI.

It is not our purpose to dwell on the terrible days, during which Mrs. Herenand nursed her husband in the crisis of his malignant disorder. At last the peril was over. The patient was pronounced convalescent.

The wife's prayers had been heard. The invalid was not only recovering his health, but was sincerely repentant, and had sought and been forgiven.

What a blissful day was that, when, for the first time, the physician allowed the husband and wife to converse. Long before, the patient had shown, by his altered manner, how deeply remorseful he was; but when he came to assure his long-suffering wife of it in words, her happiness repaid her a thousand fold for all she had suffered.

"How can you ever forgive me?" These were his words. "When I was abandoned, when I should have died in that horrid place, you, whom I had deserted, came to my rescue, and saved my life. Oh! Anne, you have made me, not only love and reverence you, but have given me a loftier notion of all the pure of your sex. I thought women were either vile, or flippant, as thousands think, living like I did when a bachelor: and hence my readiness to do injustice to you, and quarrel at your remonstrances——"

"Do not talk in this way, dearest," she interrupted him to say, "I was wrong too. I also have to ask forgiveness. But God at last opened my eyes, and gave me strength to amend. To him, not to me, give thanks."

"I do, I do," fervently said Mr. Herenand. "You have taught me, love, by your conduct, that religion is not a mere dead formality, as the behavior of so many professors had led me to believe. I see now that it is a living reality, teaching practical forgiveness, and sending even the wronged to seek out the wrong-doers among publicans and sinners, as in the days of Christ."

Much more he said to the same effect. Indeed, his wife had to keep out of the room a considerable part of the time, lest she should bring back an access of fever by the excitement of too much talking. These intervals of forced loneliness the convalescent spent in reading his Bible and in prayer; for the change in his character was radical; and for the first time in his life, he, who had thought himself so wise, began to acquire true wisdom. That gospel, which hitherto had seemed to him foolishness, as to the Greeks, was now the power of God unto salvation.

Suddenly Mrs. Herenand began to sicken. The cause was not long in doubt. Her disease

was pronounced to be the same as that of her husband.

This the convalescent had secretly feared from the first. An inward monitor had whispered to him that he did not deserve so great a blessing as to have her spared to him; and he felt, therefore, when the announcement of her disorder was made, that she would never recover.

He was right. She did not. Her constitution, never strong, had been further weakened by the mental anguish she had undergone; and she sank rapidly and surely.

Oh! how her husband, in his now empty chamber, strove with heaven for her life. "Not that she is not more fitted for heaven than earth," he cried, "not that I, sinner as I am, do not deserve to lose her; but that she may live to be made happy, as far as I can make her so by my unbounded devotion. Have pity, Father of Mercies."

But the inexorable decree had gone forth. She had finished her work, she had fought the good fight. Perhaps this is what death means, and that we are all called, when our mission is done. Pray heaven we may not be found to have buried our talent.

A day or two before the closing scene, the reformed husband, resisting every expostulation, insisted on being carried into his wife's room, and having a permanent bed provided for him there, so placed that he could see her all the time.

"Farewell," were almost the last words of the sweet martyr. "We shall meet in heaven. It is best to go. If I had lived, I might, perhaps, have failed, sometimes, in my duty——"

"Never, never," cried the husband.

"We don't know. It is human to be weak. Only the grace of God can make us strong. Oh! be strong, try to be strong, dearest," she added, with sudden energy. "Life is but the beginning of our spiritual development: be strong and grow in holiness: and if such things can be, I will watch over you, and so we may grow apace together. Death will not, I feel, separate us. We shall still be one, more so than ever here—thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

She spoke these last words exultingly, triumphantly; and with a voice as powerful as if in health. After she ceased, she remained a moment, smiling

at her husband: her face already, he thought, shining like an angel's. Suddenly a shadow, livid and indescribable, but such as, once seen, is ever after remembered as the shadow of death, fell across her face. She never spoke more.

VII.

MR. HERENAND went forth a changed man. It was no temporary reform that had been worked in him. His wife's death prevented all possibility of such a thing.

And now it was that the better qualities of his nature found a legitimate field for their exercise. The same head-strong characteristics, which had made him a leader in vice, rendered him, now that they were enlisted on the side of the right, a dauntless champion of the latter.

He felt that he had been doubly "bought with a price," and that neither his life, his time, nor his fortune was his own. The talents that had been neglected, or perverted, were now called into full play; his energies were roused to do good; and, after due preparation, he devoted himself to the work of the ministry. He chose one of our great cities for his field. But, instead of seeking to build up a merely fashionable church, he preached the gospel in the lanes and alleys, preached it to the poor, to the criminal, to the Pariah. His liberal income enabled him to give largely, to build houses of worship where they were most wanted: and many a sacred edifice now attests his benevolence, as many a congregation recalls his labors. When he had sown the good seed in one place, he went to another; but it was always to the same neglected classes that he preached. "There is a Paganism growing up in our midst," he would say, "among the thousands, who, in our great cities, are virtually excluded from our costly churches. I feel this is my peculiar field, and God helping me, I will have none other."

He also, reader, had found his mission. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, are the "sheaves" he has garnered. His name is in all the churches. But not the less worthy was the work of the meek wife, who dying that she might save him, was the true cause, under God, of these blessed labors. In heaven, if not on earth, her services are known. When, like her, the fervent preacher has finished his task, he also will be permitted to, "go home."

"CAST THY BREAD UPON THE WATERS."

BY MARY L. MEANY.

"Fire! fire! fire!" The shrill alarm rang out on the evening air, and multitudes followed the rattling engines to the scene of conflagration—a block of small buildings in the most densely populated part of the city. Despite the exertions of the firemen the flames continued to spread, until it was evident that the entire block would be destroyed. The occupants were persons in moderate circumstances, who now stood watching the progress of the surging flames with intense anxiety, yet powerless to avert what to some of the number would be utter ruin.

"Take care of your pocket-book, Maury; one of our neighbors has just been relieved of the burden of his," said one of the crowd, addressing an elderly man, who, with his wife clinging to his arm, was silently gazing at one of the burning houses. He turned as the words reached his ear, and with a faint smile of mournful significance, replied,

"Thank you for the warning, friend Thomas, but that is a matter of which I have no fears. The only thieves I have to fear are the flames, and against them I cannot guard."

He turned away as he spoke, and his troubled glance met that of his wife, over whose pale cheeks tears were quickly falling.

The attention of many spectators had been drawn to them, and a young man, who stood at some little distance, riveted his eyes upon the sorrowing couple with an expression of something more than mere curiosity or compassion. He then spoke to Mr. Thomas.

"I believe you called that gentleman Maury?"

"Yes. William Maury is his name," was the reply.

"Did he not formerly keep a trimming store in Second street?"

"Yes, for many years; but the march of improvement crowded him and other small dealers out, to make room for large establishments, and some time ago he came up here. His case is a sad one. All his means were invested in his goods, and he has not a dollar insurance, and as his house was next to the one in which the fire broke out he has saved nothing. In one respect he is fortunate; he has no family, only himself and wife; but they will be entirely destitute."

The young man bowed his thanks to his informant, and pushed his way through the crowd till he stood beside the object of his inquiries, whom he accosted in a tone of respectful familiarity.

"Pardon the liberty I am about taking, sir; we are old friends, though I fear you do not remember me. Will not Mrs. Maury's health suffer by being exposed to the night air?"

"I am afraid it will," replied Mr. Maury, looking anxiously at his wife.

"I do not feel the cold," she said, quietly.

"No; anxiety renders you insensible to it; but that does not lessen your danger. Indeed you should not remain longer," said the stranger, with an air of deep interest.

"Alas! where shall we go?" half sighed the spirit-saddened man, still gazing wistfully on his once comfortable home.

"Allow me, sir, to claim the privilege of friendship, and conduct you to my house. Remain here for a moment and I will return."

With these words the young man hastened away, but presently reappeared and conducted the Maurys to a cab, in which all three took their places, and were soon driven to a distant part of the city, where the vehicle stopped before a neat two-story building. The young man, who had meantime gave his name to his companions as Richard Davis, assisted them to alight, and discharging the cab led the way through a small store to a comfortably furnished sitting-room, where requesting them to take seats and make themselves at home, he left them speculating on the cause of the great interest he seemed to take in their affairs.

They had but little time to interchange expressions of wonder, ere their host reappeared with a pleasant-looking young woman whom he introduced as his wife, and who greeted them with such frank, earnest cordiality as tended to increase their astonishment. The young man laughed gaily as he saw their surprise.

"Well," he exclaimed, "I see I have raised your curiosity, so I must not longer delay to gratify it. Let me ask you in the first place, Mr. Maury, if you have any recollection of a poor boy, who some fifteen years ago attracted your benevolent notice, and whom you started

in life with a stock of trimmings that to him seemed almost inexhaustible?"

Mr. Maury slowly shook his head, while he gazed upon his host with increased wonder.

"No!" resumed Richard. "How should one amongst numberless kindred deeds remain in the memory of the generous benefactor? But it has remained, and will ever remain impressed on my mind, for I was the unfortunate child thus bountifully assisted. I was alone in the world, with no relations nor acquaintances even, save a poor family of the name of Connor, who had known my deceased mother, and for her sake gave an humble shelter to her destitute orphan. What with selling chips, running errands now and then, and so on, I earned a trifle occasionally which was useful to those with whom I lived, for they had a large family, and could but ill afford the additional expense of supporting me.

"After awhile I found that errand boys and girls who lived near us were getting along first rate, as they said, by disposing of candy and cakes, which a woman in our neighborhood supplied them with at a low price, and I adopted this mode of making a living, which, though toilsome, I found equal to my humble expectations, and I continued it for a long time.

"One day, however, I was very unfortunate. I had taken a new route, and wandered on hour after hour without making any sale; and it was nearly dark when I turned to go home, more completely down-hearted than I had ever been before. I was going on slowly, holding out my little basket of confectionary to the few passers-by, when a boy coming along gave a tip to my basket, which upset its contents into the gutter. This was the finishing stroke to the day's calamities, and as the fellow ran off laughing heartily at my doleful looks, I sat down on a step and began to cry in utter despair; for I remembered that I had nothing to begin the next day with, and no money to replace my little stock.

"But it happened that it was near your store that this disaster occurred. You had seen it all and called me to you. Very soon you were made acquainted with my story, and you not only gave me a quarter dollar, which amply covered my loss, but stocked my basket with various little articles of trimming, which you said I could take about with the candies, and when I could find no sale for the one, I might for the other. I recollect how frightened I was when I saw you putting in so many things, for the candy woman was always particular about the price of every cake and stick of candy, and I did not dream that you intended giving me so much without payment. But when I said about it you only

laughed and told me to take them for nothing, and when they were all sold, if I wanted more to come back, and you would sell whatever I wanted very low, and some day I might have a store of my own. While you were talking your wife came down stairs, and after looking at me a moment, went up again and brought me two big buns, which I eat as I went home. Never did food taste to me so delicious, for I had eaten nothing since breakfast; and after all the trouble I had had through the day, I was now completely happy.

"On reaching home another piece of good luck awaited me. I found a pedlar (an old acquaintance of Connors') at supper with them, and after I had related all that passed to my good friends, who were surprised at the sight of the basket full of trimmings, the pedlar proposed to take me with him in his journeyings. This appeared to all a fine chance for me, as he intended, as soon as he could realize sufficient means, to open a store in some western town, and promised to give me, should I prove worthy, a liberal share in the profits.

"I thankfully accepted his offer, and it was decided that on the following day we should depart. The only thing that troubled me was that the hour for starting was to be so early that I could not go to my generous benefactor, whose kindness was the commencement of my good fortune, and inform him of my project. This at first grieved me a good deal, but as one of the children, from the description I gave of the store, was positive that the sign bore the name of William Murray. I contented myself with resolving that as soon as the pedlar (uncle Rogers as he told me to call him) would fulfil his promise of teaching me writing, I would send a letter from whatever part of the country I might chance to be, which should both assure you of my lasting gratitude, and detail my situation and prospects. It was full two years before I was able to act on that resolution, and as I had not learned your name correctly, of course my letter failed to reach you.

"But I must hasten with my story, leaving particulars to a more seasonable time. My little stock was carefully deposited in uncle Rogers' covered wagon, and thus having, as he termed it, formed a co-partnership, we pursued our wanderings for some time with success, and at last opened a small store in Cincinnati. As years passed by, our business continued to flourish beyond our most sanguine expectations. Uncle Rogers faithfully fulfilled his promises in my regard, and when at length I became the husband of Susie," he glanced pleasantly at his blushing

wife as he spoke, "I found myself at the summit of earthly happiness. Uncle Rogers' delight in our union was scarcely less, I believe, than my own; but the good old man did not live long to witness our felicity, and his death was to both of us a sad affliction. Nor did the last token of his attachment, his bequest to me of all the little property he possessed, tend to decrease my sorrow.

"After his death Cincinnati became distasteful to me. I longed to behold my native city once more, and as Susie had no ties to render her reluctant to depart, we soon made arrangements for coming hither.

"During all the period of my absence, I had retained a lively recollection of the events of the day preceding my departure; and on my arrival, as soon as I had found a boarding-house, and conveyed Susie and our baggage to it, I hastened to Second street. I had not thought of the changes that fifteen years make in a thriving city. The entire street looked to me unfamiliar, and I walked square after square, looking intently at every trimming store, making inquiries at several; and at last remembering the directory I consulted it in eager anticipation: all in vain. Tired, disappointed, and a good deal out of humor, I returned to my wife, acquainting her with the ill success of my search. She, to whom I had often related the unlooked-for bounty that made the name of Maury a sacred word to me, sympathized in my disappointment, but encouraged me to hope that on the morrow I might be more successful. But the morrow brought only a similar result. As for the Connors', after whom I next sought, I easily found their former residence, and learned that they had all gone to the West several years previous.

"To-day, a lucky chance led me to the fire. I had been but a few moments there when your neighbor warned you about pick-pockets. The name struck me as being so much like the one that was haunting my memory, that I leaned forward eagerly to see the person he addressed,

and when I beheld your face, and heard the well-remembered voice, my heart leaped with the conviction that I at length beheld my benefactor. A few inquiries satisfied me that I was correct, and after almost being induced to despair of ever meeting you again, you may imagine that I delayed not an instant to avail myself of the opportunity thus afforded of addressing you.

"And now, my dear friends," continued the young man, taking a hand of each and pressing them warmly between his own, "let me end this long recital by requesting you henceforth to consider this house your home. Nay, no refusal!" he added, in a tone of entreaty as Mr. Maury was about to speak. "I had intended when I left Cincinnati to see if we could not become partners in our business; now I insist upon it, for I am sure the connection will prove both pleasant and profitable. Come, Susie, and tell our friends that my chief inducement to return to my native place arose from the hope of again seeing them, and being honored with their friendship."

The young wife readily corroborated her husband's words, and assured them of the pleasure it would likewise afford her to have them remain, who seemed like old familiar friends, she had heard them spoken of so often. The aged couple at first were silent from excess of emotion, but Mrs. Maury folded her arms lovingly around Susie, while her husband, pressing Richard's hand in grateful acceptance of his offer, in tremulous accents besought heaven's blessing on the house that afforded shelter to the homeless. There were tears in every eye in that group, but tears of sweet and happy feelings; and when they separated to seek their tranquil repose, the hearts of the young people were full of the pleasurable emotions that ever wait on a generous deed; while their guests with mingled feelings of awe, love and gratitude, gave thanks to Him who had thus fulfilled for them the gracious promise, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days thou shalt find it again."

DR. WETHERGREEN'S PRACTICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SUSY L——'S DIARY."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 34.

CHAPTER V.

THE next morning, when Ambrose was at Dr. Joseph's room, talking and tearing a bit of newspaper to pieces mechanically, as he talked, he stopped suddenly in the midst of something that he was saying, ran his eyes over the paper he held, and then read aloud to Joseph—"Lost. On Tuesday, 27th ult., a female canary bird, of delicate color, with white about her breast and wings. She is an intelligent bird; sings almost constantly, and answers to the names 'Birdy' and 'Charly.' The bird is a favorite. Any one who will restore her to her owner, No. 96 Lowell street, will be very gratefully rewarded."

Dr. Joseph's face had been a thoughtful one all the morning; for his mind was on the painful last night's scene. Ambrose, when he looked up, could not see much change in his face. The mouth was a little sadder, that was all. For the rest, he had his eyes fixed on birdy, who was the busiest thing alive now, bathing and shaking her wings.

"Too outrageous bad! ain't it, cousin Jo?"

"Yes; I'm sorry. I can spare her," looking back into Ambrose's face. "That poor fellow could spare his child, last night, and be a man. Pity if I can't spare a bird I've had so short a time; but, I tell you, Nat, it will make my heart ache. It does now, thinking of it. For I sit here alone and wait so much, you know! I had grown so tired of it before birdy came! She, the darling! see her, Nat! see how she exults in the bath! she has made it so much easier for me to wait and to hope."

"Well, you just wait. We'll walk around to-night, when it is cooler, and see how things look at No. 96. We'll see if they look as if there was a lack of comforts there. If they do, why then we'll give up the bird, won't we? If they don't, I have thought of a way to fix matters, so that the owner of the bird and you shall both be content. What say you to this, old fellow?" clapping one hand on Joseph's shoulder, at the same time, that, with the other, he took hold of the visor of his cap to go.

"What does birdy say?" asked Dr. Joseph.

Birdy went up to her perch out of the bath,

looked over to her master's face, said, "Eh?—eh?" and kept her wings fluttering, and her bill going amongst the feathers, in a bustling way, as if she meant to signify to Joseph and to all concerned, that she could by no means stop to go round to No. 96; that she had altogether too much to do where she was; and so intended to stay.

The doctor and Ambrose both laughed at her. The doctor called her "darling!" Ambrose said, "You're a knowing little thing!" and started toward the door. "I'm going in to French's to smoke and eat some oysters;" with his hand on the door-knob, and coloring a little in the neighborhood of the sorts of his hair. The color of the rest of his good-natured face could hardly be increased by any amount of blushing whatever. "You'd better go too."

"No."

"No! don't you ever smoke yet?"

"No."

"I would raise your spirits; I can tell you that."

"They'd fall again though. Can't you tell me that too?"

"Well, I can. But come and eat some oysters."

"No, cousin Nat."

"No? who ever saw such a fellow? did ever you, my bird!"

"Eh," said birdy. "Eh; eh."

"She means 'yes,'" laughed Joseph. "She does the same herself. She never goes to French's. She stays here, eats her seed and cuttle-bone and drinks her water."

"And what do you do?" dropping the door-handle. "How do you live? on bread and coffee and nothing else, only a little butter, perhaps?"

"Chiefly. Now and then, when I can afford it, and order it, my landlady sends up, for my dinner, a slice of meat, or fish, and a potato, with some gravy, and brown bread. I used to have something of the kind every day, when I first came; when my expectations were up; and often some delicate bits with my breakfast and tea. I don't miss it, Nat," seeing that his cousin had an unspeakable amount of dole in his looks. "I am just as well, even better without it. I am perfectly content so far as my living is concerned."

I want business; want something to do; that is all I want."

"And that'll come some time, if you can stand it, poor fellow. I ain't going in to French's," coming to sit by the table with his cap on. "Where—where's your pen? Yes, I see. I'm going to write to mother and Nan. Or, no I ain't!" wiping the pen he had already dipped into the ink. "I shall go to-morrow, by a late train to see 'em. I shall go out now and be looking about. Suppose you go with me. Suppose we go now and see how things look at No. 96. And then I can be pushing matters for the rest of the day. What say, old fellow?"

The "old fellow" said he would go; whistled softly a strain or two of "The last Rose of Summer," looked at birdy and went out.

No. 96 was a very pretty house with gable-windows above, and bay-windows below; with terraces covered heavily with dark green grass and dotted with little clumps of box, and large clumps of flowering shrubs. The yard was large and so was the garden. Through the clear panes of the bay-windows they saw green leaves, scarlet and white flowers, and ladies in light dresses sitting. They looked for the name on the door and found that it was Cunningham, "J. F. Cunningham." They looked for an empty bird-cage hanging; but found instead two bird-cages, in a balcony that ran back to a door in the wing; and in each cage a bird was perched; a bobolink in one, a goldfinch in the other. A green parrot at a lower kitchen door, that opened into the garden, clamored for "cr—r—racker;" and kept clamoring, in spite of all two beautiful children, a boy and a girl, could do in supplying him with the desired article.

"Do you know of anybody that has found a canary, sir?" The rosy-cheeked boy who asked the question was at Ambrose's side, where he and Dr. Joseph stood looking over the enclosure at No. 96.

"Why, my little fellow?" asked Ambrose, with his hand lying on the boy's head.

"'Cause Car'line here," tipping his head toward No. 96, "lost hern one day. It flew away. An' she said if I'd find it anywheres, she'd gi' me fifty cents. An' I want ter find 'im."

"Who is Caroline?"

"Don't you know?" smiling as if that were strange enough. "She's his sister;" again tipping his head toward the house. "She's Mr. Cun'gham's sister. Her name's Car'line. She's very good. She's give mother a good deal."

"And she's going to give you fifty cents if you find the bird?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I'll give you fifty cents and more too, whether you find the bird or not," taking out his purse, "here's a little gold dollar for you. Can you carry it home without losing it, think?"

"In here, I can," slipping it into his mouth. "I guess you're as good as she is?" he added, looking inquiringly up into Ambrose's face, and over into Dr. Joseph's.

"As good as who is, Caroline?"

"Yes, Car'line. I'm goin' home now; thank you, sir. I'm goin' ter tell mother, an' show this to 'er."

"That's right. Don't swallow it. And, here!" for the boy was already tripping, although with his face half turned back to them.

"What's your name?"

"Isaac Allen, sir. 'Ike,' they call me all on 'em," replied the boy, walking with the longest steps he could take, backward toward his home.

"Well, be a good boy, Ike. Be a good boy to your mother. Be a good man." Ambrose laughed and spoke "at the top of his voice;" for the boy was already some rods from them.

"Yes, I will," hallowed back the boy, laughing in his turn. "I'm goin' ter show this," touching his tongue, "to mother." And now he turned fairly about with his back toward them, running with his might.

CHAPTER VI.

NOTHING was said about birdy, or about No. 96, on their way to Joseph's room. They laughed now and then. Ambrose rather vociferously, thinking of "Ike." Ambrose said once, "I shall keep my eye on that little fellow; if I can find out where he lives. I wish I had asked him."

And just as they reached Joseph's place, he said, without lifting his head from its thoughtful inclination,

"And that poor fellow, the architect—I never can think of his name—I shall see to him; that I know!"

Dr. Joseph found a call to Mr. Harvey's on his slate. He went, therefore, leaving Ambrose to employ himself as he pleased in his room.

"We're glad he's gone, ain't we, birdy?" said he, not taking time to look up to the bird; but, giving the books a shove from one side of the table, he sat down and began to write. Scratch, scratch went the pen, carried on and on through the lines by his powerful hand. There; a sweeping, graceful flourish, and it was done.

"Hear how it sounds, little lady," said he, still without looking up. He was taking the sheet into his hand to read it over aloud.

"No. 96," he read, "the bird you lost on the

27th ultimo, came flying into a poor man's window and lit on his finger and sang to him, the first thing. She has been singing and talking to him ever since; when her head is out from under her wing, that is; and she has made it easier, more comfortable for him rubbing along in the world, that is, as yet, rather a hard world for him to make his way in.

"Now, if you want your bird, No. 96, you have only to say so, (this day, or to-morrow, early, if you please,) in a note for the post-office, addressed to 'N. A.' But if you're a mind to give her up, here's a valuable bosom-pin made to order out of California gold. It is for the owner of the bird, whoever he or she may be. The pin won't pay you, whoever you may be. I don't send it for that. I send it to gratify myself. You must find *your* gratification in knowing that you have done good to one who needs and truly deserves it."

Then came the far-sweeping flourish; and that was all.

He enclosed the brooch, carefully folded in many rolls of tissue paper, and was gone with it before Dr. Joseph came back.

Dr. Joseph was gone a long time. Mrs. Harvey knew of a lady, Mrs. Holmes, of Hanover street, who had rheumatism; who had had it many years; who had tried a hundred remedies prescribed by one and another physician, one and another good old lady, but without the least perceptible benefit. On the contrary, her complaint became worse. The cords of her left arm became contracted and stiffened more and more. She slept less and less nights. She *dreaded* the nights, Mrs. Harvey said; dreaded the days; dreaded everything. "Mrs. Holmes would give any sum to be well," an acquaintance of Mrs. Harvey's, who was present, said. And she had heard her husband, had heard Mr. Holmes, who was an excellent husband and very fond of his wife, say, that he wouldn't value half he was worth, and he was a rich man, any more than he would value a straw, if he could see her as she was ten years ago.

"She wanted me to speak to you about it," interposed Mrs. Harvey. "She wants you to try if you think there is the least chance of doing her good. She wants you to call to-day to see her, at any rate."

Dr. Joseph would go, he said, and took her address.

"Ah, and our near neighbor, Mrs. Dale—you've met her here once or twice, you remember," said Mrs. Harvey, as Joseph was leaving the house; "she wants you to see her baby. You had better go there first; for I think the child

has a settled fever; scarlet fever, I am afraid it is. I should dread that, in the neighborhood," with a light shudder. "My baby died of scarlet fever, you remember I told you."

Yes, Dr. Joseph remembered. He looked down on little Willy's good face—he stood in the door beside his mother, with one hand holding her gown, and the other hugging a book of pictures that his friend, Dr. Joseph, had lately given him.

"Good-bye," said the boy, in answer to the look; "but stop! I want to kiss you just as I do papa, before you go."

"Bless him!" said the young doctor, kissing him and patting his shoulder.

When he raised his head and looked at Mrs. Harvey to bid her a "good morning," she saw tears in his eyes. And he saw tears in hers; for both had been touched by the genuine love and earnestness of the boy. Both thought what a dear boy he had been to them; and both prayed God, in that brief moment, to spare *him* the darling! whatever sickness came near.

The evening and the early morning passed, and no letter had been left at the post-office for "N. A." Ambrose *knew*; for he had been running in every hour. Humph! it took people so long! His was delivered at 96 yesterday, he knew; for he made an especial request to that end, and gave the post-boy a quarter.

"If this Miss Caroline Cunningham turns out to be an angel, (as she would do, you see, in a novel, however it may happen in this real life of yours) if you come face to face in all the public places and bump your noses at every corner, if she is as delicate and sweet as a lily, or as fresh and queenly as a rose, don't let love for her come into your heart. If you feel it thumping and edging its way at all, your nerves and veins, stave it off; for she never would have her eyes open till now. She'd come crawling when the meals were ready; she'd go crawling and dragging behind you, when she had your arm in the streets. Ha! I should go raving distracted with such a wife!" leaping out of his chair and half way across the room.

Dr. Joseph laughed quietly, with his thoughts as much on his new patients, as on what his cousin Ambrose was saying and doing. Even while he laughed, he turned the "Examiner" over to find Dr. Cook's essay on scarlet fever.

"I'm going!" He was gone. Ambrose was gone like an engine out of the chamber, down the stairs, out of the house. The next moment after Dr. Joseph lost sight of the vanishing form, he heard him laughing and repeating that he was gone, under his window.

"Sir—I can spare my bird. I want her to be

talked with a great deal, though; else she will miss it so much. I want her to be in the air a good deal now, in warm weather; and when it comes cold, I want her to be in a warm place, nights. She always has been. She will be chilled to death, perhaps, if she is forgotten, any time. She likes lettuce and chick-weed, now and then.

"I don't care about the brooch. It don't come near the place that my bird filled. I will keep it, however, if you desire it.

"My bird likes to be let out of the cage to walk and fly where she pleases around the room. Please let her come out sometimes, but be careful that no cats are near. Be careful every way; for there never was such a dear bird."

"There, old chap, what do you think of it?"

Ambrose had been standing in Dr. Joseph's door, with his cap on, with his elbows out at right angles, holding the sheet in both hands reading from it aloud.

Joseph kept his eyes on birdy, and the tip of his pen-holder some minutes between his teeth, without speaking. When he did speak, he said something about being rather sorry for the owner of the bird.

"Wonder if the little rascal is sorry," said Ambrose, going up to the cage. "If she is——"

"Eh? eh? eh?" interrupted birdy, shaking the water from her wings into his face; so that he went flying back and pretended to lose his breath. Then they all laughed, birdy and all. That is, birdy warbled as they had never heard her before; and between the strains she looked down on them with cunning eyes.

"Take this for a sign, cousin Jo, that she ain't sorry," said Ambrose. "Her old mistress ain't sorry."

"How do you know that it isn't a *master*?"

"See!" showing him the beautiful characters. "She rather likes it, depend upon it. Besides having rather a kind heart, (as one sees she has, by her care for her bird) which, if there was no other consideration, would make her give the bird up to you, she must rather like the romance and so on, of the incident. She does, I'll warrant you. If she's a weak thing, like some young girls, she'll write letters on her perfumed, gilt-edged, embossed sheets, to send in every direction. She'll begin 'em all with her '*ma ami*!' " (he pronounced it "May a my," and Dr. Joseph and birdy laughed with their might.) "She would! Then she'd tell the story. She'd own that her precious little night-cap is full of it when she sleeps, so that she dreams the rarest dreams of the new master that her bird sings to. She'd say that she dreams of seeing him; that she dreamed the night before, how she was in a

sweet place, where the grass and the wild flowers grew, and where a charming stream ran, sitting and thinking of him, when, all at once, he came in sight with her bird in his hand; and that, some how, (she hardly knew how, in her dream,) she was pledged to him there; and her bird was standing, dear thing! with one of her pretty feet on his finger and one on hers, singing ready to break her throat. Did one ever? She'd own, in conclusion, that she was foolish enough, that very day, to go off alone to 'the valley,' to see if she could find a place there, by the brook, anywhere, that was like that in her dream; and that, where-ever she went on the grounds, she half expected to see the very man of her dream coming out from behind a monument, or some shrubbery, or trees, close by her. She would, wouldn't she, rascal? So she would. You and I know. *He* knows," giving his hand a slight toss toward Dr. Joseph. "He believes it, and rather likes it, busy as he makes himself, indifferent as he *pretends* to make himself, there, with his sugar-powders and his monstrous great globules. If she, if the bird's old mistress is a sensible little thing, or a sensible great thing, she won't say a word, or write a word; but it will be in her thoughts a good deal, so that she'll be mighty still. She'd try not to think. She'll bite her lip, as a kind of penance, you say, whenever she finds herself given up to the thought—and, old fellow," bringing himself to a stand at Joseph's side, "this is the way I have about cured myself of dreaming—would you have believed it? biting my lip hard."

Dr. Joseph let his fingers rest on the powder he was folding, and looked up with not a little interest and pleasure in his face. "Cousin Nat, I am sure you are a good soul!" said he; for it was an expression of genuine sincerity and manliness, that he saw in the face looking down into his.

"Well, I am better than you, or anybody knows, I think; for I never do anything out of the way, without hating myself; hating, that is, the lips that spoke the profane thing, the hands that scrambled and pushed and made headlong haste to the sick. The soul, or whatever it is that is within me, somewhere there, where God has given it a place, I don't hate. I respect it. I have hope in it; I love it; just as I have hope in God, just as I love Him, for his holiness, you see. For this soul of mine always suffers and reproaches and begs, for every wrong thing my lips or hands do." His voice was unsteady, and he went on to stand by the bird awhile, to call her "a dear little rascal," and to see to the water in her bath.

Dr. Joseph sat very still with his fingers on

his little powder still, and his eyes on the window.

"I had been thinking about these things, you see, before your last letter came," Ambrose went on, again taking up his walk across the room. "I had thought a thousand times that *that* day I would begin new, before that last letter of yours came. Since that, I don't do anything, hardly, or say anything, that I don't, before or after it, think of myself as being—where I shall be, some day, without fail—on my death-bed; and ask myself how I'll feel then looking back to it."

"Yes; with the holy place, heaven, just before you, in sight, as it were, and an unholy life behind you," interposed Joseph.

There was a pause, which Ambrose interrupted by saying in low tones, "After that letter came, I tried not to swear. If I did swear, I bit my lip. I could have bit it through, I felt so mad with myself. Now I don't think I swear at all."

"Although you now and then affirm that you do," replied Dr. Joseph, smiling.

"I know. I do say 'I swear,' now and then. I'm going to leave that off too. One may as well be a *man*, as anything, when one is about it. See!" taking out the old watch and showing it to Joseph. "I'm off now. I've got something to see to before I go out."

"I hate to have you go," leaving his chair. "I could spare birdy better."

"I'm glad to hear you say that. Right glad I am if you like me some—rough and hard as I am."

"'Rough and hard,' cousin Nat?"

"Yes, on the outside. Good-bye, old fellow. I'm off."

CHAPTER VII.

Now, if one could only know something about birdy's old mistress; whether she had black eyes or blue, rosy cheeks or pale; whether she wore white dresses and little black aprons, or grey dresses and long grey aprons; whether she sang spontaneously; and, if she did, whether she sang waltzes and spirited ballads, or chants and vesper hymns; whether she were tall or short; if tall, whether she were slow and nun-like, or earnest and warm and child-like; if short, whether short like a doll, or short like the shortest of the sisters called commonly "the Graces"—if one could know all about it, one would like it, certainly. Dr. Joseph thought sometimes, when he sat there alone with birdy, and birdy had tucked her head under her wing for the night, that he would like to know. He did not allow his mind to dwell on it, though. It was nothing to him. Let her be

as she would, it was nothing to him, sitting there with his single room, and hardly able to pay the rent for that, hardly able to buy bread for himself and seed for the little thing up there on the perch. Caroline Cunningham, living there at her ease in the beautiful house on Lowell street, could be nothing to him—ever; nothing to him. He would remember Anna Rogers; and Dr. Rogers. He would bring them in to fill every place, if presumptuous thoughts came for admittance, so that the presumptuous thoughts should go directly away. He would take no thought for the future; what wife he would have, or what friend. He would be quiet and wait; doing whatever came to him to do with a good, earnest purpose. Mrs. Dale's child was very sick; but, God being his helper, he would raise him up. He would cure Mrs. Holmes; he had no doubt that he could. He would see to McCormick's boy. He would take as good care of him as if he were the President's boy; for no President could love his boy more than McCormick loved him; or need him so much. And, when he saw his patients all doing well, under his hands, he would bless God and be content there with his single room and his bird. So he did not go at all round into the neighborhood of No. 96. One day, when he was on Elm street, he heard a lady just behind him, say to her companion, "See! there's Caroline Cunningham. Don't *she* dress? And she's the hardest thing on the poor! and proud!"

"I sh'd think she was, 'f that's she," was the reply. "You mean that one with the children?"

"Yes. They're her brother's children. Beauties, ain't they?"

Dr. Joseph wanted to look at the pretty children. There never came a child near him, that he didn't want to speak to it, or at least to look at it. But Caroline Cunningham he would rather not see. Or, at any rate, he would take no pains, would not even turn his head to see her. He never would. Never!

Another time, he was in a drygoods store to fill some little commission of cousin Nan's; and he heard a salesman saying to a customer, "It's the richest thing in M——, by all odds. I defy you to find a piece of goods equal to it, if you go from one end of Elm street to the other. We engaged to keep it for Caroline Cunningham; or else send, if we sold this before she came for it, and get her some just precisely like it. If you know anything about her, you know that when she sets out for a thing, she sets out for a pretty nice thing. She'll have the best that there is in the market, or she won't have anything. Every

shopkeeper in M—, knows this. You can't do better, mum. You'd better take it. You'd be sure that nobody but Caroline Cunningham has a dress like it. See, mum. See the effect."

Dr. Joseph knew that the shopman was holding aloft the rich fabric promised to be kept for Caroline Cunningham; but he would have despised the poor kind of curiosity that would have led him to turn his head and see. He kept his eyes on his own poor purchase, on his own poor purse, until his errand was fairly over, and then he moved straight out; straight by the salesman; straight by "the richest thing in M—," promised to Caroline Cunningham, and home. He didn't like this. He was sorry birdy had had such a mistress; wondered whether the bird, coming from such a mistress, had really all the heartiness she appeared to him to have; and all the contentment, and all the pretty vivacity. He wondered if they were not, rather, airs that she had been trained to put on before people. He doubted birdy. He liked birdy much less than he did, a week ago. He hardly liked her at all. He fancied he should that evening take her over to No. 96, and put her into the cage with the goldfinch; to be picked on the head and tormented, if the goldfinch pleased.

He was smiling a little at his conclusion of the matter, was thinking that it was an unreasonably savage one, when he reached his door; when poor birdy, at sight of him, began to chirp in her half plaintive, half merry voice; to spring, to turn her head and keep her eyes on her master, which way soever she sprang, and then to warble precisely as if she were so glad to see him, that her little heart was ready to come out of her mouth.

Ah! Dr. Joseph almost hated himself for having doubted her a minute, the blessed thing! the dear thing! the greatest comfort that any poor, good-for-nothing fuddle like him ever had! He threw down his bundle. He had her in his hands, had her pressed close to his cheek. He held his hand so that she could pick and eat a piece of apple that he held between his teeth. It came on dusk, pretty soon, and then the bird cuddled close between his arm and his breast; talked a little, in a low, dear voice, as she cuddled, and then she tucked her head away and went to sleep. They had never loved each other so well, had never found it so good being together, as then. So Dr. Joseph thought. So he was very happy in thinking; and he sat there until bed time, without lights, nursing his bird, and his comfort in his bird; and thinking that she should no more go back to No. 96, than he himself would go.

AMBROSE had been gone from M— a week, and Dr. Joseph had not once heard from him, when, late one afternoon, he came in upon him with a "Hallo, old fellow! Back again, you see." He brushed his hands as if to free them from dust as he spoke.

"How does little rascal do?" He chirruped and whistled and sang to the bird, she chirruped and sang to him, so that the room was shaken, as it were; so that the landlady's modest little daughter came running up and said, "I knew it was you. I knew you had got back, Mr. Ambrose. I could tell by the noise."

"You could?" catching her suddenly by the arms, and taking her round the room with whirling, waltzing, rapid movements. Kate didn't mind it. She was the best dancer in Mrs. Bundy's school. She had the most delicate feet. She took the lightest steps—springing upon the very tips of her toes, as if she were an Indian rubber girl; and had the most beautiful movements, "as if her whole soul was in it," Mrs. Bundy and others said.

She didn't mind, therefore, being carried round by Ambrose's long steps and strong arms. On the contrary, "I like it," she said, quietly, when it was over.

"So do I, little one. Tell your mother, little Kate, that Dr. Jo don't want any coffee to-night. I'm going to take him away."

"You are?" asked Joseph. "I guess not."

"Ah, yes, indeed I am!" bringing his own cap and Dr. Joseph's hat. "To-morrow I will come and take you, little Kate. I want you to see what I've got down on Hanover street, a little way."

The girl clasped her hands low before her, danced gently a few steps and said, "You're good! I think you're the best of anybody."

"You do?"

"Yes; if you were to die, I should cry every night, after I went to bed, as long as I live. I was thinking about it last night." Tears were in her eyes. They came also to Ambrose's.

"Ah, no. You would think that I had gone where I should never more dig for gold, or go wandering about, or do or say any naughty things. This would be good, wouldn't it, little Kate, to go where we would never do, would never fear doing anything wrong? don't you think it would?"

Kate didn't think, she said, that she would like to die, or to have him, or anybody that she liked, die. She thought it was very easy to not go off digging gold, and to be good here. She said it with raised eyes and clasped hands.

Ambrose told her that that was because she was a little child. When she was a woman, she'd know better what it is to live.

He bade her "good-bye" with a sober face, and went with Dr. Joseph.

"Dr. Wethergreen—Dr. Wethergreen," said Joseph, reading in wondering tones the name on a new sign over the door of a house on whose gate Ambrose already had his hand.

"Yes; this is Dr. Wethergreen's place," said Ambrose, speaking briskly. "We'll go in and see 'im, won't we? We'll leave our hats here on the table—thus. We'll put our hair back from our foreheads—thus;" giving his massy black locks a sweep from his forehead. "We'll take grand steps—thus; for," looking back to Joseph with his finger lifted between them, "the doctor's a crabby stick, who will snarl and throw the poker at us if we don't suit 'im. I hear him now;" with his fingers hold of the door-handle, and his ear at the narrow opening he made. "He grumbles, you see, about the supper Mrs. Wethergreen has put before him. Hear 'im!" with his ear at the crack again. "See 'im!" opening the door wide. "There he is!" taking Joseph along and seating him, with his hands on his shoulders, in a large arm-chair by an open window. "There he is in his easy-chair, where he can see some very bright clouds by looking off in that direction." He pointed through the open window to the sunset clouds, mantling the wood-capped hills over on the Goffstown side. "There is"—opening a door that led back—"why, here's mother, as true as you live! And little Nan!" He drew them both into the room, as if in great surprise.

"What is it? how have you managed?" asked Joseph, standing, and still holding cousin Nan's slender fingers.

"Why, you see," bringing one foot around to tip it on its toes, "I went in to see Ayer about this tenement, when I was here before. I could have it if I wanted it; that is, if mother and my nice little Nan here," clapping a hand on each of Nan's shoulders, "wanted it. I thought they would. I thought that I should be going off again, sometime, no doubt. For, if I had so much gold that I must poke it out of my path with my foot

wherever I stirred," he added, swinging his foot along the floor before him, "I should search and dig. I have that in my blood," reddening deeply, and shaking himself from head to foot, lion-like, "something, I don't know what it is; an overplus of energy and strength, and I don't know what else, so that I *must* stir myself. So, I shall be off, probably. And, before I go, I wanted to have mother and little Nan and you, Jo, here together. I want mother and little Nan to take care of you; and you to take care of mother and little Nan. I've paid the rent for the year, beforehand—'twas only a hundred dollars, which I was glad to be rid of. It leaves a place in my purse where I can put some more, you see, little Nan."

"Did you ever see such a boy?" asked Mrs. Ambrose, after she and Dr. Joseph had several times exchanged looks in silence.

"Of course he never *did*, mother," said Ambrose, laughing and starting for a back room. "We came by the first train, you see," speaking to Dr. Joseph, and showing him through the open door how everything was in order out there too; showing him how the cloth was laid for four, with the same best dishes of fine green ware, that he had seen so many times, within the last ten years, on the table at the farm.

"This don't *make* you, I know, cousin Jo," said Ambrose, when they were talking it over at table, how good the location was for him, so near Elm street, and yet so much pleasanter every way for a home, than that crowded thoroughfare; how the rooms were right in number and size; and how, there, birdy's cage could be hung out among the branches, and then wouldn't she sing! "But, if you do still have to sit and wait in the old way, you can get along with it better here where mother and Nan are. That's what I thought about. You'll have warm dishes, too." And looking steadily, with his head put forward, into Dr. Joseph's face—"if you say one word, or think one thought about paying your board, for five years to come, I shall be mad. I shall! In the course of ten years, little Nan will be getting married perhaps. Then you may do something, everything that you want to, for her."

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)

THE LOVER'S DEFECT.

BY EMILY H. MAY.

My husband and I have long passed our honeymoon, but it has been succeeded by another even happier still. I now feel that Philip and myself are really united—we are one in something more than selfish, though mutual, affection and interest. I have just been nursing our first-born child; and her placid sleep in her cot by my side, gives me a half-hour's leisure to devote to the pen. As they say, her guardian angel is hovering over her; for she smiles in her slumbers. How she crowed and capered in my lap, while I chafed and rubbed her infantine limbs as she stretched them before the genial fire! What a dear, dear kiss of wedded love was that which Philip gave me, as he gazed upon her tiny features, which he and I can perceive to bud and open from day to day, like a flower coming gradually but surely into blossom. "Ah, Mary!" he said, as he touched her pretty, pretty little feet, "there is no reason why she should not dance by and by, as gracefully, as I am told, you once did. For you know, my love, I never saw you."

I met my husband, for the first time, at Newport. Mamma was staying at the Ocean House, and it was our practice, every morning, to ride out: she and my younger sisters in a carriage; and I and Ellen on horseback. One morning, just as we were about to start, a gentlemanly young man rode up, accompanied by a lady, and challenged mamma as an old acquaintance. "We are so glad to find you here, Mrs. Hardy," said the female equestrian. "We all came from Boston yesterday afternoon, except papa, who remains at home to attend to business. Even Philip, you see, is to have a fortnight's holiday. Our villa is not two hundred yards off, and one of the first persons we heard of, as being here, was yourself."

Mamma was evidently pleased at the meeting. She presented "her girls" to Miss Armstrong and her brother, and we soon decided that our respective rides would be all the pleasanter for being taken in company.

Ellen and Philip Armstrong were no strangers to us by name, no more than we to them. Their father was a leading lawyer in Boston, and had been mamma's counsellor upon the death of papa. The son had also been educated for the

bar, and already transacted a good deal of business for his father. He had partly, indeed, settled papa's estate. Mamma had the highest opinion of him, yet though she frequently spoke in his commendation, we had never happened to meet. But she often ended her praises with a sigh, or sometimes even with the mournful expression, "It really is a very sad pity!"

Our ride was charming. Ellen Armstrong and I were soon good friends, although she was nearly five years my senior. She seemed to love her brother with a more than sisterly affection, for being a little his elder, her attachment had almost a maternal character. And yet he needed no care or guidance. A fine, handsome, energetic young man, with a sustained and hearty cheerfulness of manner, and a healthy tone of mind and conversation, appeared to me, at the time, a misplaced object for a tender solicitude, which bore an inkling of resemblance to the nervous anxiety with which we regard a convalescent child. Philip rode a beautiful creature—a thoroughbred filly, which he had purchased only two days before leaving home, and had brought down purposely to train for Ellen's use; for Ellen was an excellent horsewoman, and often accompanied him at home. This high-bred mare, which they named Zobeide, was a little shy, though of gentle temper; and young Armstrong was now riding her, with a large horsecloth attached to the saddle, and hanging over loosely on the left side, in order to inure the spirited creature to the fluttering of a lady's riding-habit.

Even our beach-worn and sluggish beasts, felt the influence of the brother's and sister's capital horsemanship, especially when they were a little warmed, and we had got them off the old beaten track which they had been accustomed to traverse backward and forward, at the rate of so many pence per hour. We galloped over the breezy strand, as far as Paradise, and then, when we returned to the beach, Philip made Zobeide skip like a grasshopper. As he mounted to the top of an eminence, with the drapery streaming at his side, I could not help expressing my admiration, and addressing to Ellen some girlish nonsense about Pegasus and the god of poetry.

"How well he rides!" I exclaimed, as unservedly as if I had known Miss Armstrong a

dozen years." It is not unwomanly for me now to confess that, from the first, his appearance made a great impression upon me.

"Yes, he does," she answered, thoughtfully. "He rides well; he does everything well. And yet, I fear, he is not happy. Papa would like to see him married and settled; but he believes that no woman can ever love him."

"Has he ever tried to make one love him? If he thinks that, he knows but little of women's hearts." I said this with an earnestness which made me blush, as soon as the words were uttered and past recalling.

Ellen looked at me and smiled, but not exactly with a smile of merriment. Philip rejoined us a moment afterward. On our way homeward, as on our journey out, he proved the most considerate, efficient, and agreeable of cavaliers—at least I thought so. He addressed himself to me more frequently than to my sisters; but then I was the eldest, and considered it as no more than my right. Ellen and he insisted on accompanying us to the hotel. Mr. Armstrong did not alight and offer to assist us to dismount—which I fancied he might as well have done—but left us to the unskilful aid of Martha, the hostler, and dear mamma. "Perhaps," said I to myself, "he thinks it beneath him; or, perhaps, he is afraid to trust Zobeide's bridle into the hands of our ungainly hostler." But before I had finished surmising thus, we were all three safe on *terra firma*. They bade us good-by, and trotted off, promising to see us again to-morrow.

I slept exceedingly well that night. The air and the exercise made me feel so happy. I certainly had most curious dreams. I imagined that I was walking in —; but, upon second thoughts, I will keep that extraordinary dream to myself. The following day, soon after breakfast, the crunching of wheels was heard on the road in front of the hotel, and, two minutes afterward, Mrs. Armstrong entered our private parlor. She good-naturedly alluded to our yesterday's excursion, and invited us to dine with her, that the young people might have the pleasure of meeting again. There was to be a little dance in the evening, at the next house but one to hers, to which she and her children were invited; and she had already obtained a glad permission from the lady of the house, to bring us with her in her suite. "But, girls," she added, "go and say, 'How do you do?' to Ellen. Philip did not feel inclined to get out of the chaise, and Ellen would not leave him by himself. I believe she thinks more of his happiness than of her own."

We went out, and found our companions of yesterday at the front of the house, seated in a

neat, low, four-wheeled carriage, that was drawn by a fat, square-built, milk-white pony, with a long and most copious mane and tail. This, Ellen told us afterward, was the equipage which Philip—who was the pattern of good taste and kindness—had set up expressly for his mother's use. I thought it rather indolent on Philip's part not to enter the house and pay his respects to mamma; but all that was soon forgotten when we alluded to yesterday's frolic and this evening's promise. Philip asked me, as if by the way, whether I were fond of dancing; to which I honestly answered, "Excessively!" Instead of engaging me for the first quadrille, as I hoped he would, he only looked disappointed, and said no more. Mamma and Mrs. Armstrong soon came down the terrace steps, and the fat pony dragged his load away at a better pace than you would have expected, to look at him. In the afternoon, as were walking on the beach, we again saw Philip accustoming Zobeide to the sight of the breakers, still wearing the long cloth attached to one side of his waist, and entirely concealing his left stirrup. He pointed to Ellen in the distance, who was coming to join us; and, as he made Zobeide canter away, I remarked to mamma, with assumed indifference, that he was by far the handsomest of the visitors at Newport. She did not seem to heed the remark, nor did she begin to discuss the merits of the various *beaux* whom we daily saw. But I do believe that, in the evening, she told Ellen what I had said, which I then thought very unkind of her.

Dinner time approached, and we were ready, all in light and simple dresses, with reference not only to the season, but to the character of our evening's amusement. I cast aside the artificial flower which mamma had told me to wear, and put some real roses, with a fresh sprig of shining myrtle, into my light brown hair instead. When we reached Mrs. Armstrong's villa, the first thing I did, on entering the drawing-room, was to look for Philip. He was not there, to my surprise. When the servant came in to announce dinner, he had not yet made his appearance, and I began to fear that something of importance had called him away; but we found him seated in the dining-room, occupying his father's place at the bottom of the table, where he played the gentlemanly and gallant host in such a polished and kindly way, that I was quite sorry when the meal was ended, and Mrs. Armstrong rose to leave. Even then he had not asked me to dance, which I was beginning to think very negligent and unpolite, when I remembered that he could not by any possibility, do anything that was

either one or the other. A shawl and a parasol were the only preparation we required in August, to pay our visit to the next house but one. We found the entrance-hall already full of arrivals.

"Is your brother coming to the dance to-night?" said old and ugly Miss Courrusty to Ellen, in a tone which I did not like at all.

"I believe not," answered Ellen, gently. "He tells me he has several letters to write."

"I should think not indeed!" said Mrs. Sowerham, in an under-tone, to a "friend" behind me. "A young man like Mr. Armstrong is not much fitted for ladies' society."

"Oh! my dear madam," said Mr. Stoughter, an unwieldy monster, who looked like a stranded buoy set on end, "every family, you know, has some crook in their billet, and the Armstrong's have theirs."

"Crook!—billet! How witty and severe you are to-night!" said Miss Courrusty, with a horrible simper.

I could perceive nothing either witty or severe, but the ill-natured spirit in which it was clearly intended, made me feel uncomfortable. But Mrs. Armstrong presented me to our hostess of the evening, and I was obliged to go through with the usual social forms. One thing I had decidedly made up my mind to. Philip was not coming, and much as I liked it, I would not dance at all, if I could help it, with any other partner than him. Still I must avoid all appearance of rudeness and pouting; and I easily managed it. No professional musicians had been engaged, it being expected that a series of damsels would readily fill the office of orchestra: but when the scheme came to its practical execution, a slight hesitation and difficulty were met with, on the part of many young lady performers. One was too timid to play before so many people; another had left her "music" at home; a third had brought only polkas and waltzes, whilst it was arranged to open the ball with a quadrille; and a fourth *figurante*, it was clearly perceptible, came to dance, and not to play. Hearing this, during the preliminary interval which is devoted to presentations, recognitions, and the formations of partnerships, I whispered to the lady of the house, that I was tired of our morning's walk, and that I would rather play than dance for the present, for I had a lurking hope that Philip, after all, would come. I was called a good, dear girl, and all the rest of it, for this supposed piece of self-denial.

I became soon aware that the dancers felt my music and stepped to it with pleasure. Before the very first quadrille and polka were finished, our hostess rewarded me with several thankful

and approving nods. A waltz was next required, and I gave them Weber's charming "Invitation to Waltz," taking care not to omit the short but highly suggestive little introduction. Soon I became more and more inspired, either by the genius of that great painter-musician—if a woman may be permitted to coin such a word—or by the idea that Philip possibly was somewhere in the room listening to me. My musical recitation was addressed to him. I felt that I had never played so well in my life before; and now I understood the story of the Italian *prima donna*, who never sung or acted her best, except when her lover was in her sight in the boxes. After the opening strains were over, and I came to the part where the composer depicts in sound the full tidal rush of a crowded ball-room, I dashed through the octave passages for the right hand, with unwonted brilliancy, I fearlessly threw off whole handfuls of the richest chords, and I sustained the rhythm with a power and accuracy of which I had not believed myself capable; and when, after giving one bold strain *fortissimo*, I repeated in a whisper—if fingers can whisper—*pianissimo*, I heard that the whole room was silently attentive. The only sounds I could catch, were the dancers' steps, the rustling of their dresses, and their hurried breathing. Before the "Invitation to Waltz" was ended, a crowd had collected round the piano and myself.

It was a flattering triumph to my vanity—and what girl is quite free from vanity? But my great delight was to receive Ellen's and Mrs. Armstrong's tribute of applause. "Oh!" said the former, "if Philip had been here, what a treat it would have been to him to hear you!"

He was not here, then? Never mind; he was fond of music, and I had unexpectedly improved the favorable impression which I already seemed to have made on his mother and sister. I had good reason to be satisfied for once; you will therefore believe that I paid little heed to sundry sneers and tosses of the head, to which I could not be utterly blind and deaf, and which, I suppose, are the tax which every young person is obliged to pay at the outset, if they strive to excel in any art or accomplishment.

"Really, quite professional!" whispered Miss Courrusty, so distinctly that everybody around could hear her.

"I trembled for the piano," said Mr. Stoughter. "I expected every string to snap, and to see the poor instrument fall to pieces, like a wreck."

"Such playing as that," chimed in Mrs. Sowerham, "must be terribly violent exercise. Now and then it gave her quite a color. Did you ever see the lady-like way in which my

Albertina plays 'Rousseau's Dream,' with variations."

And so on; all which gave me as much pain as the morning mists from the sea when my fur-caped cloak is wrapped close around me. Their unjust depreciation of myself, made me think less of their mysterious allusions to Philip.

The party broke up before very late, and when we reached home, dear mamma told me, with a look of satisfaction, that though I had not danced at all, I was decidedly the *lionne* of the evening, and she was sure Mrs. and Miss Armstrong thought so too: but I felt in my inmost heart, that if Philip had only been there, a less amount of success would have given me greater satisfaction.

The morrow brought another sea-side excursion. Mrs. Armstrong, mamma, and my two sisters, had the pony-chaise, while Ellen, Philip, and myself, escorted them on horseback. The training of Zobeide seemed as if it would never end, for she still wore the pendent rug at her side. Once or twice I was near asking him when he meant to discard that elegant piece of drapery, but a certain something always closed my mouth. We talked about music, and had a long and learned comparison of the respective beauties of Bellini and Beethoven; and Ellen added that we were again to dine with them that afternoon, in order that Philip might hear me play.

At dinner we had the same arrangements as before. We found him seated in his place at table; and he had repeated his former want of politeness in allowing me to dismount from my horse as I could. I should have felt half angry with any one else—with him, it was impossible. A good heart and a well-informed mind shone forth from him throughout the repast. After dessert, he did not follow us, but observed that if the folding-doors were left open, he could hear even better than in the little drawing-room itself. Ellen shortly opened the piano, and led me to it. We could not see him as he sat, but the knowledge of his presence in the next room was enough for me. I repeated the "Invitation to Waltz," and gave that lovely composition with less energy, but with more sentiment, and a trifle slower in time than before. The strains in which you can distinctly hear two happy partners circling together with consenting steps are too delicious to be hurried over without a temptation to linger on them. The "Invitation" ended, I was about to rise, when Philip called out from the dining-room, "Oh! one more waltz, if you please." Of course, I complied, after a moment's rest, and began a subject embodying a totally different idea—Lanner's "St. Petersburg waltzes,"

which he composed for the Emperor of Russia, to embellish the celebration of an imperial wedding. I never can play that expressive piece without fancying I hear the cannon boom, the bells ringing, the bands of music resounding in the streets, and all the mingled sounds of rejoicing. I endeavored to give that coloring to my musical picture; I gradually but firmly worked out the long-increasing swells of tone, regardless of criticism from the Stoughters or the Sowerhams, if any such had been there—I even held my breath when I had to make the tide of harmony die gently away—I entered into the varying spirit of the oft-changing key-note, and at last I boldly struck the concluding chords. Before I had time to rise from the music-stool, I heard the dining-room door open and shut again, with the sound of a departing footstep. Ellen rose, and went into the room, but returned again instantly, saying to her mamma, "He is gone."

"Poor boy!" replied Mrs. Armstrong to her daughter. "I am grieved to see it, but he is lately become more susceptible than ever. I began to hope he would soon be cured."

"And so did I," good Ellen answered; "but now I see it must come to a crisis first."

The ladies went on with their evening's occupation without any further reference to Philip. Ellen was working a Berlin wool slipper for her brother; and I asked her, as I was idle, to give me the fellow one, that I might help her with the task, if it were only by filling in the ground. She glanced at her mother, and then, after a pause, answered that there was no other, but she would find something else to do, and give me that, to put in one rose and its accompanying green leaf. I did so, but must have been thinking of something else all the while; for when I returned it to her she slyly laughed and said that I had altered the pattern by adding a forget-me-not by the side of the rose, which I really had. How could I have been so very stupid?

My story is getting too long; it is time to shorten it. We went on thus, from day to day, for two happy, tantalizing weeks, many circumstances of which puzzled me by their singularity. Philip never once more visited us with his mother and sister; he only came to the door, in the chaise or on Zobeide, to whom the horse-rug seemed more indispensable than ever. He never offered to accompany us in our walks, though he often mentioned his walking a great deal at home, and Ellen always spoke of him as a pattern of activity. We never saw him at their marine villa, except seated at the table, though he was far too young and too temperate to have

devoted himself to a gourmand's pleasures. The fortnight came to an end at last; the Armstrongs were to leave, to our great regret. Mrs. Armstrong went home by steamer and rail; Philip and Ellen were to follow leisurely in the chaise.

Early on the morning of their departure they drove to our house to say "good-by." They were neither of them in spirits. They did not alight; but with a few words expressive of the hope that our next meeting might not be long delayed, they waved their adieus, and were out of sight. Mamma and my sisters went into the house; I set out for a walk, gazed in the direction in which my friends had gone, and, as some may consider, foolishly, but, as I think, naturally, began to cry with right good-will.

I had been walking for twenty minutes, toward the blue sea, when I heard the noise of approaching wheels. Their low rumbling sound struck my ear familiarly, and soon there appeared the fat white pony and the four-wheeled chaise, with Philip. He perceived me at once.

"Have you forgotten anything?" I asked, in great confusion, thinking of my red eyes.

"Yes; I have forgotten one thing of very great importance to myself, and of which dear Ellen just reminded me," said Philip, in an agitated voice. "But tell me what is the matter, Miss Hardy?"

"Nothing," I answered like a simpleton. And then, taking courage, I added, "I believe, if I confess the truth, I was crying because you and Ellen were gone."

"Ah!—I and Ellen!" he replied, with vivacity. "I am glad of that, because we too have made up our minds to spend one more day here. A little air will do you good, so come and take a short drive in the chaise."

Soon, in a complete state of wonderment, I found myself sitting by Philip's side, with my old acquaintance the stout white pony dragging us in the direction of Paradise.

As soon as we were fairly away, Philip abruptly broke silence, and said, "It is my misfortune, Miss Hardy, to have one fearful defect, which renders it impossible for any woman to love me truly."

"I do not believe it," I answered with warmth. "I am sure you are mistaken, I am certain there are women who do"—and I suddenly stopped.

"You think so? Have you the courage to be my friend and confidant? Dare I tell you the very worst?"

"Do, pray do!" I gasped, anticipating the announcement of something that was very horrible and shocking.

"With perfect health and strength, and the use of all my mental faculties, from my birth I have been afflicted and deformed by—oh, Miss Hardy!—by a club foot!"

"A club foot!" I exclaimed, aloud, "it is nothing;" and was very near adding, audibly, "Yes; for one so handsome and so good, a club foot is a misfortune; but after all it is really nothing."

The summary of our further conversation will perhaps interest the reader more than the details. I believe that before we returned, it was agreed that all masquerading by means of horse-rugs, dining-tables, and pony-chaise leather aprons was now perfectly unnecessary as far as my good opinion was concerned; and that I had told Philip frankly that I loved him better with one perfect foot, than any other man in the world with two.

Dear mamma kissed me when I told her all, and said, "Dear Mary, you are right. I am truly happy that you have made such a choice, and have been so chosen. To expect *too much* in a partner for life shows ignorance and unreasonable folly. For if we were faultless both in mind and person, we should be, not men and women on earth, but angels in heaven."

THE NIGHT OF LIFE.

BY ELIZABETH ROCKWELL.

LINDA Moreton was an orphan. Not one who walked through poverty's dark valley, desolate and alone. Not one of those sad and weary souls who dwell face to face with care and want and misery; who despairingly go on through life, toiling, suffering and enduring; who by withered hopes, and blighted joys, and crushing labor, lose all faith in God and man; whose life is a very weariness, and who long—but long in vain, to die. Wealth had ever gladdened her pathway, and smiles ever greeted her; and she had grown on from childhood's freshness to the deeper beauty of maidenhood, the admired and lovely. Yet there was a void in Linda's heart, which wealth, with all its gifts, could not fill; a longing for a love more deep, more beautiful, than ever she had known: a yearning for a fount of affection as yet undiscovered, for words and accents of endearment which had never sounded in her ears. She found no sympathy with her cold, stern aunt, the only relative she had known; none with the villagers in their business and excitement: and with a yearning, passionate desire for some object to be loved, her life went slowly on. So she made friends with the quiet rivers and the rough mountain crags: and as on the faces of old friends, gazed she on the holy stars; but no heart from them gave back the affection which she banished: and her soul was still unsatisfied. Of the mother of her childhood there lingered no remembrance, save in quiet twilight there would rise up before her a sunnier and fairer land, where no cold snows fell, nor blighting frosts, but the air was still balmy. Then as a forgotten dream, would come a face surpassingly lovely, with deep Italian eyes like her own: and she would seem to hear a soft and thrilling voice warble some simple strain, and by her side a young minstrel gazing musingly on the glorious face: and words of love were mingled with the mother's song, as she lulled her child to rest, and all was blissful and happy. Then a proud, quick step, which blanched the beautiful cheek; and made the other clasp his hand on his sword and seek to fly, but was unavailing; and there stood a man in the midst, with cold, calm eyes, wondrously like those of her aunt. There were bitter words, and passionate breathings, and quick movements there: and the

sharp stiletto did double vengeance, and the warm life-blood flowed, and the child was alone with the dead. In her earlier life, this had been to Linda but as a dream; but with her years had deepened its impression, and she now felt it as a dark reality. Once, on a calm, starry evening, she ventured to ask her aunt of her father and mother so long gone: but she never repeated the question. For a dark frown rested on Mrs. Clinton's forehead and her cold grey eyes were fixed on Linda: and after a silence that seemed the lapse of years, she said, "Speak of them no more! The past is a sealed-up book! Know, child, there is agony in that bitter past which I would close from you forever!" And so she dared no more to talk of that vision which had interwoven itself into her own being—of which she thought first at clear morning, last at stillly evening. But thought did its office, all the more perfectly, that the tongue was fettered: and it moulded and guided all her life. "Mother, gentle mother! was thy dark fate a prophecy of mine?"

It was one of those calm, balmy autumn days, when dethroned summer seems to come back to regain her crown, that Linda wandered forth in the quiet solitude of her wide domains. The day went on, and the holy sunset came: and long shadows from the glaring tree-tops fell on the leaf-strewn ground; but still she lingered, watching nature's fading glory. "Green, green hills, and quiet woodlands, cannot ye speak back to me? I am lonely, very lonely, and there is nought to love me, mother nature!" But a sudden sound of rustling among the leaves, made the maiden's cheek grow pale, and when, raising those deep languid eyes, she saw a stranger, she screamed with shame and alarm. But the stranger, bowing, apologized for the fright he had given her: and so gracefully, that she looked at him, blushing and interested. His was a high and noble brow, from which the dark hair was carelessly thrown back, a proudly raised lip, and a flashing eye, from whose defiance even the strong might shrink. His voice had a rich foreign accent, which told of sunnier climes and brighter skies.

One word led to another. The stranger was so deferential, that Linda found herself very soon, perfectly at ease with him; and insensibly con-

tinued to converse till she came in sight of her home.

After this they often met. The stranger, now a stranger no longer, was a frequent visitor at Mrs. Clinton's; but more often he and Linda passed the mornings together in the fields and woods. At last, our heroine had found something to love. She was supremely happy now, so happy that she did not observe the growing aversion of her aunt to her lover. Yes! wildly, passionately she loved, as the heart loves only *once*, and fully and wholly was that love reciprocated. But as days went on, the hour came when he might no more linger in those quiet shades, and with the true manliness of a spirit that despised all concealment, he went to Mrs. Clinton's home. He spoke of his far-away home, in sunny Italy, of his profession—that of an artist, which must ere long bring him fame: he spoke of his temporary sojourn in the quiet village: and his voice grew low and thrilling as he spoke of Linda, and his heartfelt adoration. Linda too, raised her beautiful face imploringly, and murmured, "For my sake, dear aunt!" But Mrs. Clinton's brow contracted, and her tall figure was drawn up to its utmost height, and the blossoms of hope went out in Linda's heart. Full well she knew the language of that haughty look and that proud glance, and she shrunk back, dreading the words, that as a lava tide must overwhelm them. But Mrs. Clinton spoke in tones low, though firm and cold, and schooled the strong resentment. "Go, young man, claim not the love of my child; a name of *honor, wealth*, and distinction, shall be hers, when the proud name of the Moreton shall be no longer. Think not that in after years, that a few laurels which you may win will render you worthy of her hand: for there can be no hope and no expectation for you. As for Linda, she will soon forget her childish attachment, and think of you no more. So farewell; may your life be crowned with success. This is what I desire for you, and what she desires for you, and no more." This was what the calm voice said, not the proud lip, nor the stern, cold eye. "Madam, I go," said the proud man, "from your presence forever! I bid you farewell! Many thanks for your kind wishes! We shall not meet again. And Linda"—but here the composure gave way and there was a mighty conflict in the strong breast, "You will not quite forget me, dearest, though we meet on earth no more? You will not think of me as a passing acquaintance? There is more than the bitterness of death in this farewell. My idolized! you will not *quite* forget?" No answer; but the fair head lay on his breast, and 'mid the low sobs he

heard her whisper "Never, never!" It was but a moment, and he was gone.

Days went on, and long, long weeks: but the glow on Linda's cheek faded, and the dark eye lost its lustre day by day. Evermore at quiet evening, there rose up that noble form, and as in days past, she heard that firm voice, yet so soft and thrilling to *her ears*. Mrs. Clinton saw how sorrow was doing its work on that fair face and that pure young heart: but it stirred not the smothered fires of affection in her stern, hard soul.

It was a clear winter morning, and the sun shone gladly on the virgin-robed earth. Linda was called by her aunt to her room, where she sat, cold as ever, yet evidently rejoiced by some recent intelligence. She sat for some minutes gazing on that pale, thin face, and then, putting a forced gaiety in her manner, she drew the shrinking maiden nearer, and told her of a friend of hers, an old friend, many years older than herself, who had died and left his son, sole heir to all his estates; and this son, now a rich East India merchant, came as a suitor for Linda's heart. "And now, my child," said the lady, "you of course cannot hesitate or linger in your acceptance of this proposal. Think for a few days, and then give me your answer. I am convinced it will be favorable."

Linda spoke not a word: but there came over her face such a look of despairing agony as would move the coldest heart. Days went and came, the sun rose and set, and life went on calm as ever, that weary week; but the fever was burning at her vitals. Despair spreading her raven wings over her heart, crushing the nestlings of Hope and Joy, to make place for her own sad offspring. At last, worn and weary by sleepless nights, and days of agony, by entreaties and adjurations, she came to the room of her aunt: and there signed as with her own heart's blood, the compact which banished forever hope and love, and left instead, burning misery and long, long despair! Then, as she put her name to the death-warrant of all her happiness, came back old visions of the past; visions of that high brow and artist-eye, so well known and loved but a little time ago; and then came rolling across her soul, such a lava-tide of agony, such a mighty torrent of desolation, as well nigh bowed her to the earth.

"Yet there is joy even for me," said she. "A low grave, and tall, waving grass rustling over it."

They were wedded. He, the rich merchant, with his soul formed but for gain—and she, the crushed and desolate, how mournful was the

bridal! The heartless service was ended; and they who had solemnly vowed love, undying love, went forth unknowing and unloving. In his princely mansion Linda found all that wealth could give, or admiration lavish for her enjoyment: for with all the heart he possessed Tremont admired and loved his beautiful bride: but there was a want of congeniality, a lack of sympathy between her finely-woven, sensitive nature and his coarser essence. In short, he stirred no chord in her heart. Day by day she lived on, at first striving outwardly to love and honor him, but soon sunk in a resistless apathy, like the sleep of the benumbed traveller in Alpine solitudes. So years went on; such years as time gives only to the sad and weary, so long, so endless. But at last there came a shock which forever roused her from her listless slumber.

It was a fair summer day, when Tremont came to his home distressed and weary, full of care and anxiety. Linda saw the cloud gather on his brow, yet she heeded it not: for it is only love that burns to share sorrow with the loved; and that was not a guest in Linda's soul. He rose, he left the room, cast one long, wild glance upon his once lovely bride, and was gone. It was but a moment, and a loud sound shook the dwelling to its foundations. They went to see whence the report issued; and there lay the proud heir of Ringly Heath weltering in his life-blood! Linda did not weep for him as for a husband; he had filled no place in that lonely heart. Yet with remorse she thought of her broken vows and her sundered plightings, and repentingly she wept the bitter past. Then in the rain of sorrow came the bow of hope and lighted her horizon—not an earthly hope, for all such were forever ended, but a better and a more enduring, because a heavenly. A short space of time, and the causes of Tremont's death were fully made known to his young, though desolate wife. A sudden revolution in property had made the wealthy speculator a bankrupt. He could not live to endure the disgrace, and thus the secret was unfolded.

Linda went back to the proud mansion of her aunt, from which six years before she had gone out, still pale, and sad, and desolate. Mrs. Clinton made her welcome in her own stern way, and strove to make her happy; but all efforts were unavailing. Years had left their mark on the proud, stately woman, years of sorrow, years of care. So with a shadow on their souls, a deep, a black shadow, they both went on; and all was drear and desolate.

So years went on, till at last the hour came when the proud woman must die. Mrs. Clinton died as she had lived, cold, stern and unforgiving:

with no word of the distant shore toward which her bark was sailing; no message of love and mercy for the living, no sigh of repentance for the dead. And when the last solemn rites were over, and she lay at rest in the silent city, Linda went back to the chill dwelling, and alone trod those halls. Yet it was but a short, a very short time that she dwelt mistress of that home; for other evil tidings came, and she found that the wide estates of her aunt had passed from her hands to those of others, swallowed up in the great vortex of speculation. So she left the fair fields and the hill-tops she had so much loved; and the low, peaceful valley where she had first met him, the unforgotten, the yearningly remembered. Now she was free; no marriage vows, no chains of property bound her to one whom she could not love. "But he," she thought, sadly, "he has ere this loved another, and their lot is bright, and blest, and beautiful! Had he not forgotten me he would have surely written: *love* will find means to meet the loved. Oh, misery! can he call another his beloved? Can he *all* forget me?" She was alone now, no home, no wealth, nought to support her. But here her rare accomplishments came in place, and she became a daily music teacher, a weary toiler for the bread which kept her from that death for which she daily prayed. But ere she left, she gathered up round the richly furnished house small relics of the past, among which she took an old box full of papers of trifling value. But as she turned over the useless rubbish, she found one package that made her breath come short and quick, and her heart beat with feverish violence. There they were—burning letters of *his* love to her which her eye had never seen!

What a tale was there of hopes long deferred, of wishes disappointed, of love seemingly requited! There had been many, many dark hours in Linda Tremont's life: but never had so dark a sky, so dreary a prospect been hers. "Oh, why did love unite so firmly hearts which destiny must separate forever? Yet I will go to the city: I will go whence his last letter came: I will seek him throughout the world. On life's weary sea we may yet find rest; on Time's shore we may yet meet in gladness." So she went: leaving all behind her, traveller she knew not whither, *alone*. There was a courage in that pale face, and a firm resolution that no earthly power could break; and as she silently and uncaringly gazed upon the joys and the pleasures of those around her, they called her cold and heartless. Oh! could they have known one half of the agony of that bruised and breaking heart, could they have seen the thin hands clasped in her lonely

retirement, in such devotion as the loving and the sensitive only can know, they would never have deemed her proud and unloving. But man sees only the outward seeming, not the inmost heart, and by this he judges, sternly and often unjustly. Oh! who shall tell of the beatings of the closed and agonized heart, worn out by unrequited love, and withered hope, and dark despair, which to man's eye is unseen, and to his soul forever unknown?

Thus it was with Linda. Thus it was that she was so calm and so silent, yet inwardly so tossed and so restless. The star of her life was sinking low, and was soon to fade away: yet there was one hope still, one hope daily striving with the lion-grasp of despair which nerved her for exertion. In that far away city she might meet him, and there might be bliss as of yore.

It was a clear, pure day; and the sky was cloudless, and the sun brilliantly rode on in his burning chariot, shedding light on all around, when Linda entered a dwelling in the city's midst where last her lover had resided, and from whence he had written that *last* letter, which more than all the rest had thrilled her soul. A woman with a quiet, friendly face received her; and tremblingly Linda murmured his name and asked if his home was still under her roof. "He is gone, lady," said the calm face, "gone from earth's shadows to the light of a clearer sky! For two years the grass has waved over his pillow. He was glad when the dark messenger came, and with a smile he passed the death cold river, for earth was very dark to him. There was some great sorrow which seemed to cloud all his life—what it was I never knew, for he never spoke of himself. I used to long to have him to

tell something of the night which ever seemed to overshadow him; but it was all in vain! He used to watch whenever we brought in his letters," she continued, with moistened eyes and trembling voice, "and look them over so carefully; and then I have seen him fold his hands and give a look of untold misery, and say, 'Forgotten, and by her.' At last one morning he did not come down at the usual hour, and after a long time I went up to his room, where he lay calmly and peacefully as if in blessed slumber. I spoke to him, but he answered not. I touched him, but he moved not, I laid my hand on his forehead, and it was cold as marble; and then I knew that he was dead. Well, thank God, he's over the rough sea now, and he doesn't know what sorrow is nor disappointment, but it's all light there. But—you look so strangely, lady! You did not know him?"

Linda Tremont did not die in the anguish of the hour. It is sudden grief that kills, but not long despair. She did not weep, she did not even faint: she sat still a long time tearless, cold and still. No word escaped her lips as she went away after a long time from the dwelling. She went back, back to her daily toils, back to her weary misery. Yet calm and more placid was her face as she moved on day by day: and within all was quiet; for the stillness of despair was there. They found her one morning sitting by her lonely window, with her head resting on the thin, transparent hand: but the brow was icy cold, and the hand was rigid and still. There were tears on the wasted cheek, such as had not rested there for many years; and a smile on the worn face, for the long night of life was past, and the bright morning had arisen.

BERTHA HAMILTON'S MOTHER-IN-LAW.

BY CARRY STANLEY.

"I'll be no submissive wife,
No, not I, no, not I——"

hummed Bertha Donaldson, with a spark of something more than mischief in her dark eyes, and with lips more compressed than the gentleman at her side thought quite consistent with amiability.

"Pahaw, Bertha!" said her companion somewhat petulantly, "don't be foolish; I merely mentioned it as a proposition of my mother's, but we can do as we please in the matter, you know; and if you prefer having the wedding at Beechwood, and starting from thence on our tour, I am perfectly willing. My mother only objected to it on the score of trouble, I suppose."

Bertha's fingers trembled so, that the piece of fine cambrio which she was embroidering received a rent as she jerked the working floss through it, and the flushed cheek, the tapping of the little foot, and the suppressed tones of her voice, all betrayed the excitement under which she labored.

"She is kind," answered the lady without looking up, "but let her rest assured that the servants at Beechwood think nothing too much trouble for their mistress. My wedding takes place in my old home, by the sanction of my guardian."

Cecil Hamilton looked steadily at his betrothed as she uttered her determination in a firm voice, and a shade of annoyance passed over his fine but dreamy face, as visions prophetic of discord and scenes, which he detested, rose before him as he thought of his calm, domineering mother, and his passionate but high-spirited bride.

And so the wedding took place at Beechwood. The heiress willed it so, for she was without a near relation in the world, and till she knew Cecil Hamilton, it seemed to be the only thing for her to love, connected as it was with memories of a happy childhood, and the loving eyes and voices of her parents.

During a visit to a school companion one summer vacation, Bertha became acquainted with Mr. Hamilton, who was also a guest in the house. She was at once fascinated by his elegant person, his wonderful conversational powers, his refined intellect, and above all, by the calmness of his manner, which she thought the repose of a great

mind, and not as it really was, the indolence of a dreamy nature.

On his side, Cecil Hamilton was enthralled by the beauty, the wit and vivacity of Bertha Donaldson. The light which ever flashed over her face, the gay repartee which sprung from her lips, and the sparkle of her manner, kept him in a kind of dreaming wonder as to what she would do or say next, but it gave him no trouble. He was not obliged to arouse himself to exertion, for her quaint thoughts brought out his own without effort, and beside that he knew of Bertha's dream-side also, for he had sometimes seen her eyes cast down, her little hands folded Madonna-wise, and a holy quiet settle over face and form, and he at once recognized in these moods, the ideal which he had so long sought to find realized.

The engagement soon followed with the approbation of Bertha's guardian, who being a bachelor, was glad to be so easily rid of what he considered to be a troublesome, flighty girl, who was to lead him an *ignus fatuus* chase through society after a husband. Indeed, the good man had at one time seriously thought of marrying her himself, in order to escape the vexation and responsibility of guardianship.

Of her future mother-in-law, Bertha Donaldson knew but little. With her sanguine spirit and unchilled affections, she was prepared to love deeply one who was so nearly related to Cecil, and at once proposed that his mother should live with them after their marriage, for Cecil was an only child, and Mrs. Hamilton's life would be lonely in a great city by herself.

Little did Bertha know that even without this invitation, such had been Mrs. Hamilton's intention. Her son had a fortune as large as Bertha's own, and if the heiress *would* live at Beechwood, she argued, in preference to any other place, why then *she* felt under no obligation at receiving her hospitality.

Mrs. Hamilton had been accustomed all her life to manage for those around her. She had completely swayed her intellectual, but dreamy, indolent husband, and as a matter of course she now swayed her intellectual, dreaming, indolent son. That that son's wife would rebel from such long established authority never occurred to her.

To be sure, the decided stand which Bertha took about having the wedding at dear old Beechwood and asking all her friends, caused Mrs. Hamilton to raise her eyebrows for a moment, but she looked upon it as the ebullition of temper of an unrestrained child, and speedily forgot it.

So, as we said before, Bertha Donaldson's wedding took place at Beechwood.

It was a disagreeable, drizzling evening on which Cecil Hamilton and his young wife returned from their wedding-tour; an evening, that albeit June had come with her roses and all her summer glories, made the hickory fire which blazed and crackled on the hearth in the little sitting-room, look cozy and comfortable to the tired, wet travellers. The fire was the only thing which lighted the room in the twilight, but the quaint silver tea service which stood on the already prepared table, glittered brightly in the light, as if rejoicing in its kindly old-fashioned way, that a mistress once more reigned in Beechwood.

Bertha Hamilton was both tired and nervous as she approached the tempting tea-table. The novelty of her position as the mistress of the house, made her feel as awkward as it was possible for one of her frank, independent disposition to feel, and with a shy, half lingering step, but with a smile breaking over her face as she thought how ridiculous she would look presiding at the tea-tray, she reluctantly approached the head of the table.

But Mrs. Hamilton made her comfortable at once, by taking what should have been Bertha's place, as quietly as though she had sat there, and poured tea out of those very pots for years.

The poor, tired little wife said nothing, but was secretly grateful for what she considered her mother's kindness and tact in relieving her of such terrible duties when she felt so nervous.

The next day, and the next, Mrs. Hamilton again took possession of the seat at the head of the table, and Bertha began to debate in her own mind whether she should not now claim her place as mistress of the family. Yet something in the manner of her mother-in-law deterred her from making the proposition. The love which Bertha had been so ready to give her, seemed forced back on her own bosom by Mrs. Hamilton's cold, self-sufficient manner.

Another trouble too, aroused the new wife to a sense of her real position at Beechwood. Old Mrs. Howell who had been housekeeper there since the last Mrs. Donaldson had arrived as a bride, suddenly appeared in Bertha's room one morning, jingling her basket of keys in her

excitement, and *plumping* down into a chair without waiting for an invitation, a piece of disrespect of which the formal, old-fashioned lady had never been guilty before.

"I can't stand it no longer, Miss Bertha, it's no use," exclaimed the good woman, quivering with indignation; "I can't play second fiddle to nobody."

"What is the matter, Mrs. Howell?" queried the wife, looking up with astonishment from the book which she was reading.

"Why, Miss, there is you, the mistress of the house, that never gives an order but is just like a lamb, while *madam*, she goes dictating about, just as if Beechwood was *hern*."

"I really do not know what you mean, Mrs. Howell, I have seen nothing of the kind in my mother," was the reply.

Mrs. Howell was more indignant than ever, finding that her young mistress did not appear to advocate her cause. She had held undisputed sway in Beechwood too long, to stand calmly by and see another interfere with her rights.

"Why from the very day you were married and she was left in the house, she has been domineering and dictating to us, just as if we were Virginia slaves. Just now she came while I was putting up my strawberries that's as beautiful and clear as crystal, and told me that preserves done in that way wouldn't keep. Just as if I didn't know. She says she will do the rest of the preserving herself. Well, she may, but if *she's* going to be housekeeper, I'll leave, and she may take the keys."

"Mrs. Howell!" said Bertha, in a tone intended to be severe; but poor child it was all she could say; for domestic difficulties were such new things for her to manage; Mrs. Howell, however, was in too full a tide of injuries to be easily stopped by Bertha's half timid reproof, so she went on with increasing excitement.

"And there's Jane, the chambermaid, that's been under my training ever since she was as high as my knee, *madam* must take a hair-pin and go around the edges of the carpets to see if they were clean in the corners. She didn't find much dirt, I guess, though, for I'll put Jane against the whole state for tidiness. William says he expects that next she'll go out and show him how to harness the horses or wash the carriage, and John guesses she knows more about forcing the hot-house vegetables than he does."

Mrs. Howell stopped here for want of breath, or it is most probable that Bertha would have found a separate grievance in each separate department of the establishment.

"I think, Mrs. Howell," said the young

mistress, "that you have all been so accustomed to having no one to interfere with you, that you must have mistaken my mother's manners. She is naturally distant to every one, and you have misapprehended her. I suppose she thought I was young and inexperienced, and has kindly intended to relieve me as much as possible. Take your keys however, and have no fear of any one usurping your place."

Bertha said this apparently very calmly, but in reality with her anger rising every moment. She now saw that she held the position of guest rather than of mistress at Beechwood, and she was determined to regain her place. An appeal to her husband she knew was out of the question, for she loved him too much to be willing to disgust him with a woman's quarrels, and it would be either against his wife or his mother, that he must give judgment.

Poor child; Mrs. Howell had played the Eve in the little Paradise in which Bertha had been living, and made her taste of the tree of knowledge much against her wishes. That very day some guests were to dine at Beechwood, and its young mistress soon decided upon her line of conduct. As they entered the dining-room, Bertha quietly stepped up to the head of the table, laid her hand upon the back of the chair which Mrs. Hamilton was already approaching, and said in a low tone, "I am obliged to you, mother, but I will take this seat for the future."

Mrs. Hamilton made no remonstrance, but her eyes flashed, and a white circle spread around her mouth. She withdrew a little to one side, and stood with a kind of conspicuous humility till all were seated.

Till that moment Cecil had noticed nothing of this quiet warfare. A look of annoyance and reproach which did not escape the anxious eyes of his wife, was cast upon her as he asked his mother to be seated.

"I really did not know where to sit, as I had not my accustomed place," was the reply.

A feeling of constraint and uneasiness passed over the guests, as each one felt as though they had been the usurping party. Poor Bertha's face flushed a painful crimson as she said in a half apologetic, half lagging tone,

"Ladies and gentlemen, you see me for the first time at the head of my own table, for mamma has been kind enough to relieve me of this duty heretofore, and we are not accustomed yet to the change of places."

The tact and pleasant manner of the young wife, soon made all as comfortable as they had been before, and Cecil secretly thought she had never appeared to so much advantage.

Never once during the rest of the day, did Mrs. Hamilton address her daughter-in-law, and only answered in the shortest possible manner if Bertha spoke to her, making the poor thing as uncomfortable as possible. As they stood on the piazza together in the evening, bidding adieu to the departing guests, Bertha said in a reconciliatory tone, "Are you not afraid of taking cold without your shawl, mother? I'll get it for you."

"Do not trouble yourself, Mrs. Hamilton. I do not take kindness upon sufferance," was the icy reply.

The daughter's eyes filled with tears, and her hand trembled as she twitched off a sprig of jessamine, and toyed with it to hide her emotion.

Cecil walked up and down the piazza with his hands in his pockets, whistling a disconsolate air in false time, pitying his wife whom he dearly loved, yet feeling as if his mother was really in some unaccountable way, the injured party. In truth Mrs. Hamilton had a knack of always making people feel this, in spite of their better judgment, and Bertha was beginning to think that she only must be in fault, when her mother approached her and said,

"I should not so far forget my dignity as to allude to the insult which I received to day, was it not to request that hereafter, *for your own sake*, you will select a time when there are no guests in the house, to make a display of your authority."

The tears which before were dimming Bertha's eyes, were dried up by the flash of indignation which shot from them as she replied,

"I did not mean to insult you, madam! I have too much respect for myself to forget what is due to those connected with me, but as the *mistress* of Beechwood, I felt that it was a duty I owed to my guests as well as myself, to appear hereafter in that character. I am obliged for the charge which you have hitherto taken of my affairs, but I will relieve you of it for the future."

The tone this time, was anything but conciliatory, and with a defiant air Bertha entered the house and retired to her own room. She awaited her husband's coming with some anxiety, not knowing from his manner on the piazza, whether to expect sympathy or reproach. His presence did not relieve her much. The whistling still continued, interrupted only by the monosyllables with which he replied to his wife's remarks, and when she said humbly, "Will you not kiss me good night, Cecil?" the half reluctant "yes," and the kiss smothered by a sullen sigh, made her repent having made the request. The wife's tears were

again quenched by anger, and after tossing restlessly for many hours, she at last oried herself to sleep, in consequence of her fertile imagination having pictured the gloomy, unloved future before her, in the darkest colors.

The breakfast the next morning was most uncomfortable for all. The wife felt that her peace-offering of the night before had been only half accepted; the mother, that another now stood between herself and her son, and one too, who set her will at naught; whilst Cecil thought of the annoyance it would be, to have such constant bickerings as he foresaw, and wondered why two people whom he loved so much could not live happily together.

Cecil Hamilton was in everything a man of compromise, and like all persons of that class he pleased neither party; so he quickly walked into the library, and shut himself up with the old dramatists, to revel in their delineations of character, when there was a page of human nature in the next room, which he, in his indolent egotism had not troubled himself to read.

Mrs. Hamilton "pursued the even tenor of her way," in haughty silence, always frigidly polite, but never cordial to Bertha; but this was a mood to which her son was so accustomed, that he did not even remark it; and consequently the change in his wife's manner struck him the more forcibly. He saw nothing for her to resent, and secretly regretted what he thought her sullen disposition. All the sparkle and vivacity which formerly characterized her had disappeared, and Cecil sadly missed the tender caress and light kiss which he used to receive so frequently. He was a most undemonstrative man, and little knew how his coldness and indifferent manner had chilled the warm heart of his wife. So time passed, Bertha yearning for a reconciliation with her husband, for which her proud spirit forbade her to ask since her former repulse, and he was coolly waiting till her fit of petulance should be over.

Mrs. Hamilton no longer took the head of the table nor interfered with Mrs. Howell, nor too closely scrutinized Jane's work, yet her influence was felt nevertheless. The servants complained that there was no possibility of pleasing her in anything they did, and those who had lived in the family for years constantly threatened to leave. It required all the tact and dignity of Bertha's character to retain her servants, yet not to compromise her mother-in-law.

A year passed thus at Beechwood. Bertha Hamilton's heart was now suffering for its want of early discipline. Her temper had become haughty and irritable under the cold surveillance

of Mrs. Hamilton. She had formerly yearned for the old caresses and kind words from her husband, for which her pride forbade her to ask; but she was now almost beginning to despise him for the manner in which he yielded everything to his mother. Cecil, on his part, wondered how he could have been so mistaken in a character. His wife, in some unaccountable way, always appeared to greater disadvantage before his mother. It pained him to the heart to think that it had only been a childish fancy on Bertha's part for him, and he determined not to trouble her with remonstrance; so the two went on outwardly indifferent, but inwardly sorrowing, with Mrs. Hamilton swaying her son as of old.

And thus it was, when an heiress was born to the united fortunes of the Donaldsons and Hamiltons.

The young mother wept wild tears of joy as she pressed her child to her bosom, and thought that *now* she would have some one to love her exclusively, though for a moment she trembled as she thought of her woman's destiny, "to make idols and find them clay," as she herself had done. Cecil Hamilton heaved a deep sigh, as he saw the lavish tenderness which Bertha bestowed on his daughter, and secretly envied the unconscious little thing, whilst Mrs. Hamilton declared that the mother was too delicate to nurse the child, so both for her sake and its own, a wet-nurse must be provided.

Bertha listened in silence when in Cecil's presence one evening, Mrs. Hamilton proposed it to her, but her color rose and her eyes flashed long before her mother-in-law had concluded.

"Madam," said she, "you have governed your own child during his whole life, and I shall do the same by mine. In this thing I will not be thwarted. I am perfectly able to nurse my baby, and I would rather lie her in the ground than on another's bosom. This is never to be mentioned to me again."

"But, Bertha," commenced Cecil, who was really alarmed for his wife's health, from his mother's representations.

"I have decided the matter," interrupted the wife, in a tone of such icy coldness that it left no room for remonstrance.

Mrs. Hamilton lifted her eyes and hands, with the air of a martyr, which graphic pantomime was not lost on either Bertha or her son.

So till little Marion Hamilton was three years old, was she a source of contention between her grandmother and her parents. Mrs. Hamilton looked upon the child as belonging to herself, quite as much as to its mother; she interfered with its food, its exercise, its dress; she scolded

its nurse, and often contemptuously chided Bertha herself. Bertha watched every encroachment upon her maternal authority with jealous eye, and often with angry words; and Cecil petted his darling, and appealed to his mother with regard to her education.

"I tell you, Cecil, she will grow up as headstrong and passionate as Bertha herself, if you let matters go on in this way," said Mrs. Hamilton one morning. "Her mother humors her in every whim, and I really believe the child takes pleasure in disobeying me."

"She is perfectly obedient to Bertha or her nurse," argued Cecil. "I think she is a child who must be managed by love and not harshness; it seems to call out all the bad qualities of her character." After four years of marriage, Cecil Hamilton was beginning to have glimmerings of his wife's heart, through his child.

But what Mrs. Hamilton had said was true. Little Marion defied her authority to the greatest possible extent; for her whole nature was aroused to antagonism by her grandmother's manner. At that very moment, she had espied a bed of fine carnation pinks, Mrs. Hamilton's especial favorites and care, which she had been ordered not to touch, and with a mischievous laugh she flew to it, and commenced pulling off buds and blossoms, her little hands trembling with haste, lest she should be discovered before the work of destruction was complete. With a sigh of satisfaction, Marion contemplated the wreck; then gathering up some of the flowers in her apron, she seated herself on the piazza steps to play with them. The nurse's voice was now heard calling Marion, and the child's answer from the bottom of the steps caused Mrs. Hamilton to look out of the window. In a moment her sewing was tossed on the floor, and with the swoop of a hawk she rushed upon the child. Marion was so engrossed with her flowers, that she did not hear her grandmother's approach, and with a scream she turned her eyes wild with affright, upon Mrs. Hamilton's face, as she seized her by the arm with a grip which her anger made like iron. Blow after blow reddened the little face and neck, and the sharp finger-nails sunk into the child's flesh as she pulled her along the hall. With a shake and a push that sent the little thing reeling against a shelf, she pushed Marion into a dark pantry and locked the door. The child's screams attracted Bertha, who was in another part of the ground giving directions to the gardener. Fearing some fearful accident had happened, she flew to the house, and on entering the hall the whole was explained by her mother-in-law's face, the broken flowers, and the shriek from the closet.

With a bound she reached the door, turned the key, and seized Marion, who was almost in convulsions from pain and terror of the darkness. Without a word, she carried the child to her chamber, where her husband was soon attracted by the continued crying.

"What is the matter, Bertha?" asked Cecil.

"Nothing, except that your mother has killed her," was the reply, as she still gazed into the child's face, and walked hurriedly up and down the room with it in her arms, endeavoring to quiet it. It was a long while before the shrieks subsided into sobs, and the little thing sunk into a fevered sleep on her mother's bosom.

Cecil had paced up and down the room beside Bertha, in her hurried walk, not daring to ask a question, as he saw her stern, white face.

"Cecil Hamilton," said she at last, as she turned upon her husband, like an angry lioness, "your mother and I can live together no longer. You must choose now between her, and me and your child. You ceased to love me years ago, so I suppose your preference is soon made. I thought when my baby was born, that you *must* love its mother, but I was mistaken. It was no little thing, Cecil Hamilton, to wreck my happiness so carelessly as you did, but your mother has ever stood between us. My child's temper shall not be made as irritable as mine has become, through her presence; and if she ever touches Marion again, I give you no choice for a decision, for I take her and leave your house; so help me heaven!"

"But what was the matter to-day, Bertha?" asked her husband, in a voice which differed very much from his usual *nonchalante* tone.

"Look there, and there, and there," was the reply, as the mother bared little Marion's shoulder, and pointed to the cheek and arms, on which the marks of Mrs. Hamilton's fingers still lingered. "Marion was to blame I have no doubt, but I was the proper person to punish her, in a suitable manner. Had she been shut up in that dark closet five minutes longer, she would have been an idiot for life."

The father's brow grew dark as he listened. In Bertha's excitement, the whole story of her trials with her mother-in-law, was poured into her husband's ear, the more readily perhaps, that he had never evinced so much interest in them before.

"But, Bertha, I never suspected all this," he said at last, "I have been criminal in letting my indolence and love of peace, close my eyes to your troubles so long. I have been accustomed all my life to being ruled by my mother, without knowing the fact, perhaps, and I was really

afraid that my wife was becoming irritable and unamiable without a cause, little thinking or noticing how much you had to annoy you."

"I could have borne it all, if she had only left me your love, Cecil; but to take that too!" and here Bertha burst into a passionate fit of weeping, brought on by her husband's change of manner, for had she not been sure that he now heartily sympathized with her, her old pride would have forbidden her to regret to him a love that was lost.

"My poor little wife! you love me yet, as much as when we were first married and so happy, do you not?" and Cecil imprinted a tender kiss on her forehead, as she lay sobbing on the bed where she had at last placed Marion.

Bertha threw her arm around her husband's neck, and amid tears and blushes, she confessed how unhappy his indifference had made her, and blamed herself, poor child, more than she need have done, for the domestic trouble, declaring that now she saw that it was only her pride and haughty temper that had caused it all.

Mrs. Hamilton was herself alarmed at the effects of her violence, as little Marion continued her screams after being carried to her mother's room, and she was about following to make what amends she could, when she saw her son go into the chamber. She awaited his return with much impatience, and when an hour passed by and he did not make his appearance, she felt that he was no longer under her authority, that her "kingdom was divided" already. This fact, combined with the events of the day, and Bertha's

independent disposition, made her determine to accept an invitation from a bachelor brother, who had returned from South America but a short time previously, to take charge of his house.

Cecil and Bertha in the meantime, were debating as to the kindest mode of asking Mrs. Hamilton to leave, Bertha, with a sudden revulsion of feeling caused by her happiness, having in vain endeavored to persuade her husband to let her remain. But he was inflexible. He now understood both wife and mother too well, to see much chance for happiness in such an arrangement, and he had suffered too much for four years, to be willing to run another risk.

They did not all meet again till dinner-time, when Mrs. Hamilton said she had received another letter from her brother that morning, renewing his request for her to live with him, and that she had already written to say that she would accept the invitation. Both Cecil and Bertha breathed more freely, for it was an unpleasant duty to ask a mother to leave the house.

At the end of the week they were standing on the piazza steps, bidding Mrs. Hamilton adieu, though little Marion to the last, refused to be friendly.

Many years have passed since then, and there are other little feet now, beside Marion's, pattering through the garden walks and along the halls, and Bertha Hamilton has proved to be all that her Cecil's fancy had pictured her, before he was married, and she only counts her life as really begun since the departure of *her mother-in-law*.

THE INSOLVENT MERCHANT.

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

MR. LOCKWOOD had failed. After having been a leading merchant for thirty years, a series of heavy losses, combined with the insolvency of a friend for whom he had endorsed, forced him to stop payment.

The sympathy for him was general, as it usually is for an old man, who has a family and is unfortunate. But, after awhile, whispers began to be heard against him. It was said he had failed with his hands full: that some of his creditors would not release him; in short, that he had sacrificed a long life of honesty in one hour of bitter temptation. Others prudently, if not charitably, held their peace, even though he made no retrenchment in his style of living, and though they secretly thought this fact suspicious.

It was about a fortnight after his failure, that he called his head clerk into his private office.

"John," he said, for he had always called his confidential assistant, though now a middle-aged man, by his first name, "I wish to talk with you."

"Well, sir!"

"This is the schedule of my debts, which you drew up—isn't it?" And he produced, from his private drawer, a document covering several pages.

"Yes, sir."

"I owe, according to it, six hundred thousand dollars."

"That is the sum, in round numbers. More accurately, six hundred and three thousand, ten dollars and fifty cents."

"This is the schedule of my assets." And he placed another document in his clerk's hands.

"It is, sir."

"The assets are about equal to the debts."

"Rather higher, sir. Six hundred and eighty-nine thousand, five hundred and twenty-seven dollars, and thirty-seven cents, is the exact amount."

"But they are not all good."

"Most of them are, sir." And the clerk, as he spoke, looked up in surprise.

"You are too sanguine, John," was the answer. But the eye of the merchant, instead of meeting that of his assistant, wandered past his face. "Too sanguine. Yes! entirely too sanguine."

"I think not, sir. The house stopped, you know, because it wouldn't pay two per cent a month for money. You had plenty of securities, sir, but the banks wouldn't discount them. If the assets are nursed, sir, they'll produce nearly, if not quite enough to pay dollar for dollar."

"And leave me penniless," said Mr. Lockwood, quickly. Then, coloring, he added. "But of course that's to be expected. However, this don't alter the fact, that you look at these assets too favorably. You're a younger man than myself, John, and apt to see only the bright side of affairs."

The clerk, who was honest as steel, thought, with a sigh, that he could not regard his employer's character, in as bright a light as usual. This strange opening of the conversation, and the studied avoidance of his eye, made him, for the first time in his life, suspicious of Mr. Lockwood. He could not speak, for the mournful feelings which this caused.

"I have been going over these schedules," said the merchant, "and have talked to one or two of the principal creditors. It would be folly to attempt paying dollar for dollar." He began to speak rapidly. "Seventy-five per cent is as much as the estate is worth, and nobody but ourselves could make it realize that. If there was an assignment, the expenses would eat up thousands; and besides there would be a delay of several years. It would be really doing the best for the creditors to make a compromise on those terms. Don't you think so? Watson & Cousey, Jones & Co., and other houses have as good as said they would come into the arrangement: and they, you know, are among the heaviest creditors."

The clerk still sought his employer's eye in vain. Finding, from the silence, that it was expected he should say something, he spoke,

"You did not offer an assignment, did you?"

"Of course not. Of course. That would be ruinous."

"It seems to me, sir, that is a question for the creditors to settle. If you offer them your assets, and they then refuse an assignment, agreeing to take seventy-five per cent, the settlement will be fair enough. But," he added, hesitatingly, "while you hold tight to your bills

receivable, people will say they are at your mercy."

"Not at all. Not at all. Besides let people talk. They always abuse a man when he is down. It would be criminal in me to let an assignee eat up the estate in charges. Its hard enough to be ruined by endorsing for a false friend. I don't know whether, in strict equity, it would not be more just that a hundred men should share the loss between them, than that I should bear it all. After toiling a life-time, and having once had an independence, to be reduced to beggary, in this way, is very hard. No, I'm resolved that no assignee shall plunder me also."

"But is it you now? Is it not entirely the creditors? Surely, sir, the assets are theirs, and not yours."

"To be sure. Of course I wish to see them paid. I'm only telling you what seems to me to be the best way to pay them. Surely, you'll allow, sir, that I know more about my assets than they do."

"Yes, sir."

"Can they do better than to accept my terms?"

"Perhaps not, sir. Certainly not, unless you assist them."

"What do you mean?"

"That you settle up the estate as their agent?"

"Work for nothing, and find myself," contemptuously retorted the merchant.

"Not exactly, sir. They'd allow you a fair salary."

Mr. Lockwood drummed on the table with his fingers.

"You really are fool enough to believe," he said, at last, "that the estate could be made to pay dollar for dollar."

"I not only believe it," answered the clerk, warmly, beginning to be indignant, "but I know it."

"Pooh! pooh!"

"Surely, sir, I understood the value of those assets. I've not had the control of your books for twenty years for nothing."

"Pooh! pooh!"

The clerk rose.

"Is there anything more, sir?"

Mr. Lockwood moved uneasily on his chair. After a full minute of silence, the clerk repeated his question.

"You are in a strange mood, to-day, John," replied the merchant, looking down at the table, on which he still continued to drum with his fingers. "I never knew you so obstinate."

The clerk bowed.

"If we make an assignment"—how artfully

was that ~~we~~ put in, as if the clerk was actually a principal—"you'll be thrown out of employment, and, in times like these, it will not be so easy to get a new place. You have a family too, remember."

The clerk sighed.

"But if we settle the estate ourselves, paying seventy-five cents on the dollar, there'll be a couple of years work for you, if not more; and, as you've been a faithful clerk so long, I'd not mind, at the winding up, helping you into business on your own account."

For an instant the Tempter whispered, "take the offer." But John Masters, though a poor, was an honest man; and he held fast to his integrity.

"I'd cheerfully stay on my present salary," he answered, firmly, though with emotion, "or even on a bare pittance—my wife and the children could live poorly for a year or two—if we were settling up the estate for the creditors in good faith——"

Mr. Lockwood rose to his feet. He had gone too far; had committed himself; and was now repelled. There was nothing left but to assume surprise and anger.

"What do you mean, sirrah?" he said, stamping his feet. "You appear resolved to misunderstand me to-day. How dare you insinuate what you do?"

"Sir," began the clerk, raising himself proudly to his full height.

"Not a word. Go to your desk at once. I see I was a fool to rely on your capacity, or gratitude, or anything else. Go, I say. I shall not need to consult you again."

That very day, the books, which had been in the clerk's hands for twenty years, were taken from him; while he was despatched to a distant city, nominally to see after a hazardous account. He was directed, from time to time, to remain awhile longer and watch the debtor; in a word, he was kept out of the way.

Meantime Mr. Lockwood called a meeting of his creditors. He laid both schedules before them; tendered his books for their examination; and gave verbally whatever information was sought. His assets he had marked as good, doubtful and bad; and he called in a clerk, temporarily promoted to John Masters' place, to verify his opinion.

To do the successor justice, he was a dupe, not an accessory. Mr. Lockwood had, as it were incidentally, so thoroughly imbued the young man with his own views, that the testimony of this witness was but an echo of the merchant's.

"You see, gentlemen," said the insolvent, "that, after paying expenses, and allowing for losses, there'll not be more than two-thirds, or three-quarters left. If the estate is carefully settled up, it may yield seventy-five per cent; if it is not, sixty will be the utmost it will pay."

He paused, and looking around at the blank faces, added hastily,

"But I may say that no man can settle it so advantageously as I can. I have already despatched my old and trusty clerk, Mr. Masters, to look after one of the heaviest accounts; and, indeed, he would have gone myself, if I could have been spared. He writes to me more favorably than I had hoped. I have a few friends, I find, still left, who have offered to assist me. So, if you think best, I will run the risk of paying seventy-five per cent, giving a third in cash; a third in good endorsed notes at twelve months; and a third in the same kind of security at two years."

There was silence for several minutes. Some of the creditors were completely deceived, for they had always believed the speaker to be honest; and besides, they really knew nothing, and could know nothing, about the value of the assets. Others suspected he was misleading them. But these reasoned that they were in his power; that, at the best, an assignment would realize even less than he offered; and that it was most prudent for their pockets to dissemble and accept the proffered terms. An old merchant, who belonged to this latter class, said, therefore,

"I, for one, shall take Mr. Lockwood's offer. I had expected a better show, I confess; but there's no use, I have learned, in crying over

spilt milk. Who is the endorser, Mr. Lockwood?"

The endorser was named, and proved trustworthy. In reality, he was a capitalist, to whom the insolvent had paid a large bonus, besides hypothecating his assets, for the use of his name as endorser.

All the creditors, except two or three, consented to take the seventy-five per cent: and the few, who thus stood out, Mr. Lockwood finally paid, with interest in full.

Before the two years was up, most of the paper, which had that period to run, was sought out and purchased at a usurious rate. We need not say that Mr. Lockwood was the buyer.

The clerk, on his return, was discharged. Whatever he might suspect, he never knew what the estate realized, nor does anybody else except the insolvent himself. Without proof, John Masters was too wise to say anything; for often, as the law says, "the greater truth, the greater the libel."

John Masters found employment finally, at a reduced salary, and is poorer now than ever.

Mr. Lockwood lives in a fine house, at an expense of six thousand dollars a year, or even more. Why can't he? If his estate yielded a hundred per cent, as John Masters said it would, he saved a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Yet Mr. Lockwood thinks himself an honest man.

Alas! there is a day of retribution coming for the merchant. It is of such persons that the apostle writes:—"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you."

Better in that Last Day, to be poor John Masters, than the rich insolvent.

ELVERTON VILLA.

BY FANNIE MORETON.

"Her eyes were blue and tranquil as the Summer skies,
Her cheeks was fresh as op'ning love when drow upon it lies,
Her features far exceeded the sculptor's rarest art;
Her sweet smile was expressive of purity of heart."—VIOLET VALE.

It was rather late one evening in early summer, when Mr. Irving's family arrived at their country residence for the season. Very little of the surrounding grounds could be seen in the deepening twilight. But the air was filled with melody and laden with rich fragrance. Annie Irving lingered in the wide porch which overlooked the blue and sparkling waters of the Sound—over which the moon was rising in silent mystery.

"Annie, my child, how often must I call you before you see fit to obey? I want your assistance. Fanny and Edward are tired and cross, and I cannot find the basket in which Bridget packed their things."

"I will come in, mamma, directly. I must have grown deaf to all voices except that of Nature, or I should have heard you call. But, mamma, can you wonder? only see what an endearing sight! the waves dashing up against the 'rock-bound shore,' and then gracefully receding back: and listen to the melodious songsters of the wood. Oh, mamma! I shall never want to hear Julien's imitation of Katy-did again," and Annie ran up stairs to assist sleepy Bridget in unpacking.

The sun rose bright and cloudless the next morning, and Annie was up with the lark, gaily skipping over the rocks, and gathering pebbles on the sandy shore. The younger children were wild with delight to be where there were real live cows and dear little chickens to feed. Mrs. Irving's health, which had been declining rapidly, improved under the bracing air and sea-bathing.

Annie had a dear little white pony which she used to ride, accompanied by mamma and the children in the carriage. Many a pleasant excursion was made in this manner. They would

frequently take provisions with them and have a little pic-nic party in the woods, and sister Annie would take her book and seat herself beneath some shady tree and pass the time quietly, while the children romped and played over Nature's velvet carpet.

Time glided rapidly on, and the last summer month was drawing to a close. Oh, how quickly does time fly with the light-hearted and gay, yet ever lingers with a slow monotonous movement with the weary and toil-worn.

Mr. Irving began to think of returning to the city, as the gentleman who owned the "Villa" was daily expected from Italy, where he had been passing several years.

"Oh, mamma," said Annie, one evening, in reply to her mother's inquiry of what serious thoughts were passing in her mind. "I was thinking how Mr. Elverton could leave such a beautiful spot, such an earthly Paradise, to wander to a far country where, I am *sure*, he could find none fairer."

"Yes, Annie, Nature has indeed been lavish of her gifts here. But, dearest, you must remember that there are many months in the year when all things do not look *as* beautiful. Before many weeks have passed, the trees and shrubs will be stripped of their bright foliage, and will be decked with the sombre tints of autumn, and not long after, instead of walking on soft green grass, you will have to tread over frozen ground, and instead of gentle breezes fanning your brow, to face a keen and biting air. The blue waves of the sound will then look to you like a dreary waste of waters."

"Oh, mamma! stop! I beseech of you do not make me discontented with the present by anticipating the future. But, mamma, it makes my

heart ache to think we may never perhaps visit this lovely spot again. I am attached to every bush, and love those grand old rocks so much. Oh, mamma! I cannot bear to think of going away. How I wish Mr. Elverton would part with his place. I'm sure he can't prize it very much, or he would not have left it. But when papa wrote to him to inquire his price and if he would sell, he returned the answer that he would not part with his Villa for ten times its value."

"And I can't say that I blame him," said Mrs. Irving, "to have one spot which he can call 'home,' and which is associated in his mind with many tender recollections, it would be indeed strange unless driven by dire necessity, should he seek to dispose of it."

On the next Sabbath morning, soon after Mr. Irving's family were seated in the little village church, a gentleman entered and proceeded leisurely up the aisle. He hesitated for a moment as he passed Mr. Irving's pew, but perceiving that it was occupied, he passed on to one immediately in front.

When the pastor's solemn prayer was ended, he still sat with his head bowed upon his hands, apparently in deep thought—but as a low, silver-toned voice fell upon his ear murmuring the responses, he involuntarily turned round to gaze upon a face, whose chief beauty was the expression that rested upon it of guilelessness and purity.

Annie Irving's eyes met that ardent gaze of admiration, and her own fell not to her prayer book, but to the floor.

"Papa," said Annie, as they were driving home from church, "who was that gentleman who sat directly in front of you?"

"That," said Mr. Irving, turning a keen glance on his daughter who blushed deeply, "that was

Mr. Elverton. I was not aware that he had come back, and as his return is a polite signal for our departure, we shall in all probability leave Elverton Villa before next Sabbath."

"Pardon this intrusion," said a manly voice the next morning, as the owner of it entered the sitting-room at Elverton Villa, "I was directed hither by a servant, who informed me I would find Mr. Irving within."

"Papa left for the city this morning," said Annie, who chanced to be the sole occupant of the apartment, "but if you would like to see mamma, I will call her."

"Not for the world. Miss Irving, I presume," he added, bowing, "I called merely in a friendly manner. Though personally unknown to your father, I have corresponded with him frequently on business matters, and being in the neighborhood I presumed to call, being dependant for my reception upon a self-introduction."

"Sister Annie," said a sweet voice from the piazza, "sister Annie, mamma says if you are not engaged, she would like you to go with Eddie and me strawberrying in the woods."

"In a few minutes," said Annie, rising and going to the window, "tell mamma that I will."

"Show you where strawberries grow in abundance," said a voice at her side. "Now, my little friend, you will please call brother Eddie, and bring your own and sister Annie's sun-bonnet, and if perfectly agreeable to Miss Annie," he added, bowing to her, "I should be most happy to become your pioneer."

And Mr. Elverton *did* become Annie's pioneer, not only for one afternoon, but for life.

Annie Irving was not called to leave Elverton Villa, but was prayed in such earnest tones to stay and become its future mistress, that she *could not* refuse.

"ALICE GRAY."

BY CLARENCE MAY.

It was a summer's evening, and we were all seated in the pleasant parlor, where the breath of the June roses came floating in through the open casements. The winds had gone to sleep, and a gentle calm, that breathed its influence to the heart, rested upon everything around. It was an evening for poetry, or music—when we have thoughts as pleasant as the dreams of angels, and are truly happy. My sweet sister—my little "Sing On," as I playfully call her, was seated at the piano, and turning around with a smile, asked what she should play for me.

"Give me an old song," I said—"one of those sweet old ballads, I heard years ago. I love them so, for they seem to breathe the very soul of music."

Appreciating my request, she turned over the leaves of an old music-book, till she came to "Alice Gray;" and then the following words, wedded to sweet music, and sung with touching pathos, trembled on the evening air:

"She's all my fancy painted her,
She's lovely, she's divine;
But her heart, it is another's,
She never can be mine.
Yet loved I, as man never loved,
A love without decay;
Oh! my heart, my heart is breaking,
For the love of Alice Gray."

"Her dark brown hair is braided,
O'er a brow of spotless white;
Her soft blue eye now languishes,
Now flashes with delight.
The hair is braided not for me,
The eye is turned away;
Yet my heart, my heart is breaking,
For the love of Alice Gray."

"There!" said Ida, "that is all I will sing you, for you look so sad—but no wonder; I often wished I could learn the story connected with this touching song, as there *must* be one. Do tell it to me," and she left the piano and nestled down by my side.

"I—I know no story," I replied, hesitatingly; but in truth she had just aroused me from a reverie, in which I was tracing the circumstances that had called forth so sad a lay.

"You know, dear Ida," I continued, "as *Festus* says, 'tales of love are far more readily made than remembered.'"

"Then I will reply with *Helen*—'Tell-tale, make one.'"

"And I will commence like *Festus*—

"Well then, my story says, there was a pair
Of lovers once——"

"May," said Ida, slightly pouting her rosebud lips; "tell it to me right, and in earnest—will you not?"

I could not resist the appealing glance from those dark eyes, and so, sitting there in the quiet gloaming, I told her the story of "Alice Gray."

Summer was just flinging her rosy enchantment over hill and dale, when Ernest Sydney, a young artist of great promise, left the crowded city, to restore his somewhat delicate health, and revel awhile amid the beauties of Nature, so congenial to his tastes. He had labored hard the previous winter and spring, and produced several pictures, that had already won him a name—but alas! they did not win him gold, for he was poor—and now his shattered health forbade him to pursue his studies so closely for awhile. So with his favorite pencil and sketch-book, he started on his journey.

Ernest Sydney was a true artist and poet. Although in humble circumstances, genius had set her seal upon his noble brow, and in his brilliant, dark eyes, could be read high thoughts, ambitious longings, and bright dreams. Ah, what brilliant prophets of the future, are Youth and Hope!

Either by chance or design, the second day of his journey found him in the beautiful and secluded village of Beechdale, and after gazing upon those sunny hills, and fair valleys, and drinking in the pure, fresh breeze that floated down from the distant mountains, he knew that a lovelier spot than this could not be found, and concluded to remain awhile. So Beechdale was thrown into a pleasant state of excitement, when it became known that a distinguished young artist had taken rooms at the village inn, and many offers were made to him by the wealthier citizens for portraits, but he respectfully declined, as recreation was what he most needed at present.

And now, day after day, the young stranger was seen climbing the hills, and wandering by the streams, or lying beneath the shadow of the

trees, and sketching some quiet landscape sleeping among the hills, and smiling in its rich array of summer verdure.

It was while thus occupied, one sunny day, that the sweetest vision that ever met the gaze of Ernest Sydney, crossed his path, and sent the warm young blood to his manly brow. He had just finished sketching a beautiful scene near the village, and was retracing his steps, when voices reached his ear, and the next instant two persons came in view—one an elderly lady, but the other a young girl, apparently about eighteen, and fairer than the brightest conception of an artist's dream!

Responding to the stranger's respectful salutation, the young girl for a moment raised her eyes to his, and that glance was enough to haunt him for a life-time. Momentary as it was, he seemed to read in it something to be folded to the heart, to dream over when alone, and wonder if they should ever meet again.

Ernest Sydney had never met a woman he could love. Beautiful ones he had seen, but his heart had never thrilled beneath their gaze, till now. Ah, who shall say there is not a destiny marked out for us all, be it for good or for evil?

"Surely," thought Ernest, as he walked slowly toward the village, "the possessor of such a face, and such eyes, must be gifted with all that man could wish for in woman—all that I have ever dreamed of, and longed for, with my warm and passionate heart; and something tells me, we shall meet again."

Yes, Alice Gray was beautiful. It might well have been said of her, in a poet's language,

"Grace was in her steps, heaven in her eyes,
In every gesture dignity and love."

The general expression of her face could only be called that of "hushed enthusiasm;" but when engaged in animated conversation, or when her sympathies were aroused, "waves of feeling" seemed to break over it in quick succession, and gave it a wonderful fascination.

Ah, what a power there is in beauty when it is lighted from within, by a fervid and enthusiastic soul. I have gazed upon faces where eyes, lips, and features "seemed to be drawn by love's own hand," but where *soul* was found wanting, and the charm was broken.

Several weeks after the arrival of Ernest Sydney in Beechdale, a large pic-nic was held in the woods near by, and of course, the young artist was not neglected in the invitations.

It was then he first became acquainted with Alice Gray. He roamed with her through the grand old woods, and conversed with her on

many subjects; and what a bright day that was to Ernest Sydney! A new life seemed to dawn upon him—a new image was enshrined within his heart. It was a face and form he could now never forget; for the first sweet tones that ever thrilled those hidden cells, were the low, soft words of Alice Gray!

But Ernest could not accompany her home, as he evidently wished to do, for a handsome young farmer claimed her attention during the afternoon, and did not quit her side any more that day. It was very provoking, of course; but Ernest never paused to consider *why* it was so—he only knew he had met a woman he could love—aye, loved already—and he went to his hotel to dream, for he carried with him a bright presence that clothed everything with beauty. Alas! how many, like Ernest Sydney, have clasped a beautiful vision, and fondly cherished it till the idol was shattered, and the whole world seemed desolate!

Alice was a petted darling. The only child of wealthy parents, her every wish was indulged, and what wonder if she grew a little self-willed and proud-spirited. She knew she was beautiful, and could command admiration; and she courted it. But Alice Gray was not, in heart, a coquette. 'Tis true, she was already solemnly engaged to a young man who loved her fondly—and she was not one that would break a vow lightly—but she was pleased with the attentions of the young artist, who expressed admiration in every look and tone, and she saw no harm in passing some of her leisure hours in his society. How often this is the case, when the results that follow, are seen—too late!

So Ernest Sydney became a frequent and welcome visitor at Rose Cottage. Alice was passionately fond of painting, as her portfolio well proved, for it was filled with sweet sketches; and Ernest, who was astonished at her skill, playfully asked whether she would become his pupil, and was still more astonished when she readily acquiesced; saying that she had long ago wished to obtain a further knowledge of the glorious art.

Thus day after day, they were brought together, sometimes roaming o'er the hills, to sketch some favorite view, or seated in the pleasant parlor, where he would guide her eager pencil, or reveal the mysteries of his divine art. And oft-times the pencil was thrown aside, and the leaves of some loved poet turned over, and favorite passages read: for there was a sympathy between them, and they *knew* they thought alike.

But why need I linger over those sunny hours?

Ernest Sydney frequently met Mr. Brainard, the young farmer, at the cottage; but he was not surprised at this, for he saw a great deal of other company there; and little did he think that Alice—*his* Alice, as he learned to dream of her—was betrothed to another. Ah, how a knowledge of that would have shut out the sunshine, that now made the earth so fair and bright!

Weeks passed—then months—and the fair-browed summer resigned her sceptre to the golden autumn, and was softly stealing away, ere Ernest Sydney thought of returning to the city—so pleasantly had the hours flown by, and he could scarcely realize that they were gone. But he felt that he must dream no more, for there was work for him to do. And *could* he lay aside his dreams, and return with the same light and buoyant heart, with which he came? Better, far better, would it have been for Ernest Sydney, could he have done so; but there were sweet dreams he had cherished in his young bosom, he could not hush without many a heart-pang—many a bitter tear!

It was night—

“—a night when stars were smiling
O'er the lost day hushed to rest,
And the earth lay like an Eden,
Long ere sin had stained its breast;
And from clouds that flitted o'er her,
Looked the moon's face, calm and pale,
As a nun's when careless fingers,
Lift the dark folds of her veil!
When the pale flowers closed their leaflets
On their bosoms, snowy-fair,
Heeding not the zephyrs' pleading,
Kissing them with lips of air!
When the waves with softest murmur,
Broke upon the moonlit shore,
Low as when a maiden murmurs
Vows, and troth-plights o'er and o'er!”

Alice and Ernest were seated alone in the parlor at Rose Cottage, gazing out upon the moonlight. She had been playing and singing for him some sweet ballads, little dreaming how he hung upon every word and tone, for how did he know but what they would be the last?

“Alice,” he murmured, at length, “since I am soon going to leave these beautiful shades, I must tell you with my lips, what my actions, perhaps, have already confessed, that I love you—love you better than life—better than the whole world; and oh, to go back into the busy world with the sweet assurance that I am loved—Alice, dear Alice, say that it is so,” and he clasped her soft hand, and gazed passionately into her face.

And what answer read he there? Alas, it was paler than the moonlight without, and those eyes—those gentle eyes, whose light had flashed

into his very soul—were bent upon the floor, as she faltered forth in a low and trembling voice—

“Mr. Sydney—forgive me—I never dreamed you had learned to love me thus, for I can never be more to you than a friend—or a sister, if you will. We have met *too late*. I am betrothed to one who loves me well.”

“And you love him too? But what right have I to question you? It is past, and I have loved vainly, madly, and God only knows how well! Alice, you have made me wretched, but I forgive you, and the prayer of my life shall be for your eternal happiness! Farewell—but one kiss”—and he pressed his lips to her pale brow—“one kiss, the seal upon the tomb of hope; and now, farewell, forever!” and he rushed wildly from the room.

“Ernest! Ernest! oh, do not leave me thus;” but he was gone, and perhaps it was well; for had he returned at that moment, she would have laid her head upon his bosom, breathed to him how he was loved, and wept out the agony that was almost killing her. But it was all over now, and the wretched girl sunk back upon her seat, with the pale moonlight falling around her, the only witness of those bitter, bitter tears.

* * * * *

It would be difficult to describe how Ernest Sydney passed that long and wretched night. One thought though, was ever uppermost—he must leave Alice and Beechdale the next day—he must tear his heart from those loved scenes—he must be strong, and go back into the busy world, forgetting hours that had for a short time been the very sunshine of his existence.

And yet the image of that pale, pale face, and trembling form, would come back to him, and his heart would ask—did she not love him? Oh, even in his wretchedness, how dear was that thought!

No, he could not leave her thus. He would write to her—for he could not trust himself to look upon her again—and beseech her to tell him all. It would be a mournful pleasure to know even the worst, rather than be in doubt. When the morning at length dawned, he hastily penned the following letter:

“DEAREST ALICE—The heart that loved thee so wildly, must make its moan. I cannot leave your beautiful village, as I intended to do, without learning from your own lips, whether I am loved. It may be wrong to ask it—for you are *another's*—but oh! I beseech you, by the happy hours we have passed together, refuse not to tell me all. Alas! why did we not meet in

earlier years—in childhood—for something tells me I am loved; but now, oh, cruel fate! we must be as strangers; you will never see me again.

"Pardon my wild words. Oh, Alice! can you dream how I have loved you—love you still? 'Tis the most beautiful dream I ever experienced. It seems as if I had been reading some glorious poem, and when once read, and its fiery words burned into the soul, it can never be new again, but 'twill linger round my heart—a sunny and beautiful memory—a soft echo from the ghost-haunted past, coming in lonely hours to sweep the heart-strings with a tender melody. It was sweet, this poem—this dream—

'Twas bright, 'twas Heavenly—but 'tis past.'

"And now, farewell! My heart has made its moan, and after waiting for a reply to this, I will go back into the busy world, and strive—to forget! May you be happy! ERNEST."

He despatched this with a messenger to Rose Cottage, and after waiting several hours, received a reply. Tremblingly he opened the delicate note, and after glancing rapidly over the small and beautiful hand-writing, read as follows:

"ERNEST, DEAREST ERNEST—I feel almost guilty in writing to you now, but you so earnestly request it, that I cannot refuse. I will not deceive you—I love you! but until last night, I never acknowledged it even to my own heart. But I am calm now. Duty-bids me love another better, for I am solemnly engaged, and I will be true.

"Forgive me for all the sorrow I have caused you; and do not forget me, even when you have learned to love another better.

'A place in thy memory, dearest,
Is all that I claim;
So pause and look back when thou hearest
The sound of my name!'

"Oh, I dare not trust myself to speak of the tears, the emotions, with which I read your letter! I must not. I am weary, Ernest—almost ill; and you will pardon a shorter letter than you must have wished. May heaven bless you. Farewell! ALICE."

Ernest Sydney placed this little note next his heart, and left Beechdale the same day. The dream was over. His heart was now like a closed book, with faded flowers pressed between its leaves, which he sometimes opened in his lonely hours, and sadly thought of the forgotten past.

But he labored diligently, and his youthful

dreams were more than realized. Success crowned every effort, and at length he sought the sunny land of Italy, to gaze upon the glorious creations of the master minds, and drink in their inspiration. He spent a long and dreamy summer amid that home of beauty, poesy, and art—sometimes guiding his magic pencil, at others, wandering dreamily along the sunset waves, gazing into the strangely lustrous eyes of Italia's fair daughters, and listening to their musical voices; but he carried the "dearer image" in his heart, and they exerted their blandishments in vain.

Then he crossed the Alps into the German land, and sailed down the glorious Rhine, gazing upon its rock-bound shores, crowned with dark old castles, and thinking over wild legends he had read long before. But amid all his wanderings, and amid all this beauty, his heart still ached for home, and at length he again sailed for his native land.

Three years have passed. Rose Cottage is still as beautiful as ever, for the flowering vines have again wreathed their tendrils around the low casements, and the red roses blush in every nook.

In the parlor are seated two persons. Mr. Gray, poring over the morning papers; the other a lady, gentle and beautiful, dressed in deep mourning. It is Alice Brainard—a widow now—and again an inmate of the dear old home-stead. Ah, how very lovely she is, years have but matured her beauty; and round her ripe, red lips lingers the same sweet smile, and in her eyes the sunny light that dwelt there of old. She is reading too—a volume of poems—one they read together; and perhaps her thoughts are now with the absent and the loved.

"Alice," said Mr. Gray, "I notice among the distinguished arrivals in the last vessel from Liverpool, the name of Ernest Sydney, Esq., the young American artist—a friend of yours, I believe."

The words were very simple, and Mr. Gray continued on reading; but they brought a deep blush to the fair brow of Alice, and the past came o'er her like a gush of old-time music.

A week passed, and one sunny day, a very handsome gentleman paused before Rose Cottage, and after glancing around with apparent emotion, advanced and lifted the massive knocker, which had scarcely sounded, ere the door opened, and he was shown into the parlor. Shall we intrude, and witness the very pleasant, and very touching little scene that is being acted there? Ah, you imagine it all already, I know; for the

gentleman is Ernest Sydney—and Alice—*his*
Alice now—rests her fair head upon his true and
manly breast

“And now for him, and him alone,
Her eye shines bright and gay;
Her heart, her heart is now his own,
His bride is Alice Gray.”

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KATE CONWAY'S LAST FLIRTATION.

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

KATE CONWAY prided herself on being an accomplished flirt. By the time she was eighteen, she had coquetted with half the beaux of the village. Her victims had been among all ages. There was Mr. Price, who had just put the large panes of plate glass into his windows, and who bowed over the counter in his white cravat, as he displayed with bewitching grace the last new silk for the beauty's inspection; there was old Judge Warner, with nine children, a fine estate, and a couple of gouty limbs; there was young Dr. Stuart; and there were a dozen others, all of whom, if report was to be credited, had been lured on to offer themselves, but only to receive, in return, a look of affected surprise, an exclamation "dear me, I never thought of such a thing," and a decided refusal. The sufferings of her victims no more moved Kate than do the tortures of the flies whom mischievous boys impale. She went on, month after month, and season after season, in her work of slaying hearts, with the strong determination, by the aid of art and dress, to be irresistible to every bachelor she met. Now, however, that she expected always to refuse her suitors. She had a vague persuasion, that, sometime, when she was between eighteen and twenty, the exact period would depend upon circumstances, she would have her last flirtation; fall seriously in love; and marry like the rest of the world. For to be an old maid was her especial aversion, as it is, strange to say, of so many other coquettes.

"Oh! Lilly, such news," she cried, one day to her friend, "we've got a new lawyer in town. His name is up at Mrs. Bradlee's window—'Henry Anderson, Attorney at Law and Solicitor in Chancery'—in splendid gilt letters on a new black japanned sign. I wonder whether he's married or not."

"A solicitor for your affections is more to the purpose, Kate, I suspect."

A few evenings after Kate stood before her dressing-glass, preparing for a party, arranging some fragrant clematis sprays in her dark hair.

"I wonder, Lilly," she said, for her friend was staying with her for a few days, "whether that 'solicitor in chancery' is sentimental or dignified; for the altitude of these flowers depends

entirely on that:—shall they be high or low, graceful or queenly, a drooping spray above the ear or a starry coronal above the brow?" And so Kate rattled on, till she had finished her toilet, when, making a mock curtsy before the glass, she said, "My dear, you are quite charming to-night, and Mr. Henry Anderson's destiny is fulfilled."

Mr. Henry Anderson thought so himself, as Kate entered the rooms. He eagerly requested an introduction from Mrs. Bradlee and the few others whom he chanced to know. But Kate, for some time, evaded this, being too skilful a flirt to yield at once; though she contrived that he should always be in her vicinity and hear her most brilliant *bon mots*.

The introduction was at last obtained by the young lawyer; the lady was apparently indifferent, but nevertheless fascinating; and when she was led to the dance by another, Harry Anderson followed her with his eyes, watching every movement. Kate was no ordinary coquette. The science of dropping gloves and handkerchiefs, and of giving bouquets to gentlemen to hold was utterly beneath so great a tactician:—these were the weapons, she was accustomed to say, of bread-and-butter Misses only. She moved far more skilfully, undermining the citadel, to use her own phrase, before the garrison suspected that an attack was contemplated.

"Lilly, he's done for," was her exclamation, as she threw herself into a chair, when she and her friend reached home. "But I must make assurance doubly sure. I must begin to read Coke and Blackstone, I'm afraid. It will be horribly dry, to be sure; but then he's a catch worth having. Really the chap talks well, and is quite rich, they say."

From that hour Kate made what she called "a dead set" at the young lawyer. And, for a time, she really succeeded in entrancing him. He liked her for her sprightliness, her beauty, and her intelligence; for, to do her justice, Kate was both sensible and well read. During a whole month, Harry Anderson thought there was nobody equal to Kate.¹ On her part she omitted no opportunity, nor art, to enslave him. What wonder that Harry, little practised as he was in the wiles of coquettes, thought, for a time, not

only that she was the most charming of her sex, but that she actually loved him.

Had Kate, with her many good qualities, possessed a true and faithful heart, she might have been happy. We are not sure that, after the flirtation had begun, she found herself more seriously interested than she had ever been before. In her secret soul, perhaps, she loved Harry: only, with the perversity of her character, she would not admit it to herself. One day, Lilly jested with her on the subject, saying,

"How do you succeed with Coke and Blackstone, Kate? Ah! my beauty, there's an old adage, 'Never play with edge tools.' There, don't blush so. I declare, you've turned as red as a peony."

"Foolishness!"

"Now don't attempt to deny it. Positively, it's the old story of the 'biter bit.' Ah! Kate, I knew your time would come at last."

"You counted without your host then," said Kate, pettishly. "I've been only flirting with Harry Anderson."

"Nonsense!"

"On my honor."

"We'll see, my lady. But, remember, I'm to be bride's-maid."

"Pshaw!" And Kate, as she spoke, pettishly flung herself away.

That night there was to be a grand party at Mrs. Overton's. Piqued at the supposition thrown out by her friend, Kate received Harry coldly. "We'll see," she said to herself, "whether people shall have it to say that Kate Conway, in flirting, lost her own heart." Her lover, undeterred by a first rebuff, soon returned to the charge.

"Pray," he said, "may I have the honor of dancing with you?"

"No, I shall not dance to-night," was the curt reply. And, fairly turning her back on him, as Lilly came up, she began to converse with her friend.

Harry was, for a moment, bewildered. It was impossible to misconstrue such rudeness. Yet, he asked himself, could it be possible that Kate, after all which had passed between them, would intentionally treat him in this manner. Hence, though at first inclined to be angry, he finally persuaded himself that something must have put her out of humor. It was but charity, therefore, to give her another trial.

Harry Anderson was, in fact, an uncommon person. He had strong sense, brilliant talents, and a high sense of justice. As he stood, apparently watching the dancers, he was reviewing his acquaintance with Kate, and the result was a conviction, that, for some unaccountable reason,

she was beside herself that night. "To-morrow," he said, "she will regret it. I will not quarrel with her hastily."

But while he was forming these charitable conclusions, what was his amazement to see Kate led out to dance. His cheek tingled with anger. Perhaps she saw this, for she cast a look of triumph on him as he passed, and was soon chatting gaily with her partner, nay! bestowing on him her sweetest smiles. A stranger, to have observed them, would have said that she was seriously in love with her companion.

This conduct naturally produced a revulsion in Harry's determination. He had believed her really attached to him, and, under that conviction, was ready to forgive and forget. But now he beheld her displaying exactly the same *emprossement* to another.

"The heartless flirt," he said, between his teeth. "They told me she was a coquette, and fool that I was! I disbelieved it. But I am rightly punished."

Overcome by rage and mortification, and feeling himself unfit for such a scene, Harry turned to leave the room. But, as he approached the door, a crowd blocked up the passage. Just at that moment Kate and her partner, having finished the figure they were dancing, stopped directly in front of Harry. They did not see the justly angry lover, and went on with a conversation, which, at the first word, he knew related to himself.

"Pooh! Harry Anderson!" said Kate, contemptuously opening and shutting her fan, "how foolish you talk, Mr. Swanton. He's a mere sprig."

"Then you won't allow me to congratulate you?"

"Ridiculous! Must one be expected to marry everybody one flirts with? Dear me, in that case, there'd be no amusement left."

Just at that moment, Kate, happening to turn around, saw the frowning and disdainful countenance of Harry turned full upon her. She comprehended immediately that she had been overheard. For a moment she turned as white as a sheet. But, recovering herself, with that admirable dissimulation which flirting had taught her, she turned carelessly to her partner, and, with a laugh, made a witty remark on their *vis-à-vis*, who was a rival belle.

The blood of Harry boiled. All his love for Kate was gone, from that moment, forever. His was one of those natures, which, once deceived, never gave confidence again to the traitor. He had excused Kate, earlier in the evening, thinking that her spirits, perhaps, had been ruffled

But for this wanton insult, for this heartless avowal that she was coquetting with him, he had neither pardon nor excuse.

He never visited her again. When they met in the street, he bowed stiffly to her, but that was all. If they encountered each other at a party, he confined himself to the most indifferent remarks, and these the fewest possible. Occasionally they were thrown together, at the house of mutual friends, where but a small number of guests was present, and where necessarily their intercourse had to be more intimate; but at such times, he always confined himself to the most general remarks, and exhibited to her, in a manner too plain to be mistaken, that she had lost all hold upon his heart. Once, they were left *tete-a-tete* for a few minutes, and Kate availed herself of the chance to throw all her old tenderness into her manner, reasoning that, if she failed, no one would see her defeat. She did fail, for Harry was as impassable as a marble statue; and she bit her lips in mortification for having, as she said to herself, demeaned herself to propitiate him.

From that time a fatality seemed to follow Kate. The name of a flirt had now become affixed to her, for her intimacy with Harry had attracted general attention, and her heartlessness met with universal condemnation. The beaux laughed and chatted with her, but took care not to go further. If ever one showed symptoms of becoming too deeply interested, there were a dozen to put him on his guard, by saying, "she hasn't heart enough to love any man," "she'll only fool you, as she has done a dozen others, and as she did Harry Anderson."

So Kate remains unmarried, and is fast becoming an old maid. Harry is long since united to a lovely young bride, and all her old female companions have found partners for life: but Kate is still paying the penalty, and will pay it forever, by that **LAST FLIRTATION**.

DR. WETHERGREEN'S PRACTICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SUSY L—'S DIARY."

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 101.

CHAPTER IX.

Mrs. HOLMES, in a few weeks, could use her left arm nearly as well as her right; and this was the marvel of all who knew her, insomuch that old Mrs. Townsend, who had been "hauled up," as she had it, for twenty years with the same complaint, and a half-dozen others, or more, men and women, with unwieldy chronic maladies—such as neuralgia, *tic dolozeux*, gout, dyspepsia, and asthma—came and said they *must* be healed, if it was any way in his power; they had been sick so long; they had suffered so much; they were so tired of it! Drs. Grave-send and Coffin laughed, when they heard what cases came to him; laughed obstreperously when they heard that all the poor Irish were flocking to him in that sickly time, because McCormick had told them how he, "Doctor-r-r Wethergreen, himself, had raised his son up from the dead intirely, a'most."

Dr. Joseph heard that they laughed; but he let it pass. And, quietly going his way, he healed many, so that more and more business came into his hands, until he, too, had as much as he could do. Chiefly among the poor, however; for the poor all over his quarter of the city, had got it into their heads how kind and attentive he was; how he had been heard to say that he *hoped* he would try as hard for McCormick's boy, as he would if he were the President's boy; that, if he would not, he was no follower of the Saviour, certainly. There were other physicians there at M——, they thanked God! who would say the same; who would do the same. Large numbers went to them; and still there were large numbers left for Dr. Wethergreen. And they liked to go to him; to do the little that they could for him, because he was poor, like them; because, like them, he was having a tough struggle in the great world.

At one poor room, that, for a long time he visited daily, he found often some new comfort that had crept in and taken its place while he was away. Glasses for the medicines came, and little plates to cover them close; silver spoons, fresh covers of the whitest linen on the stand

where the dishes were kept; fresh napkins to be used about the bed; fresh bed-clothes, finer than any that belonged in that house, marked "C. Phillips," in delicate characters; and good dishes for the family table came, as Dr. Joseph knew; for dishes of beautiful ware were often there on the shelves and on the table, side by side with the burned and battered dishes.

When the child became better, so that she could again hold her playthings in her hand, Dr. Joseph found her amusing herself one day with a tiny willow basket, filled with artificial flowers.

"See!" said the child, turning up her pale, sick face. "Doria give it to me. Doria Phillips." The little fluttering hands put it out toward the doctor, and left it there on the edge of the bed for him to see it. "Doria give it to me," repeated the child. "She's a good Doria."

"Who is she? who is Doria, little one?"

"She's Doria Phillips. She *comes* here; she and Caddy. Caddy's good too; didn't you know it?" again lifting the large eyes.

"No, I didn't know it, Roxy. Who are they?" he added, addressing the mother.

"Why," began she, hesitating and preparing her words; "They're the ones that have been coming here all along. You've seen how comfortable things have been here?"

"Yes."

"Well, its all their doing. I hadn't ought to say anything about it," she added, after a pause. "I've wanted to tell you, a hundred times," with filling eyes. "But they—or Doria, at least, told me not to. She told me that if I lisped a word of it, she should be offended with me. So I mustn't. I might tell about Caddy; for *she* don't care. She don't seem to think or care whether anybody knows it, or not. But Doria told me not to mention either of 'em to you. She said she had her reasons. I don't know what they are, I'm sure."

"No;" interposed Dr. Joseph, giving the basket back to the child. "But you do perfectly right to respect them, whatever they are."

Then he gave directions and went.

Now, it had been so all along, that Dr. Joseph visited little Roxy last on his round; so that he

was always there about noon. But, in the course of a few days after this, two or three of his patients were off his hands, and he was round to Mrs. Mercer's by a little past eleven. And he found Doria and Cad both there; Doria standing with her bonnet in her hand, talking with Mrs. Mercer; Cad sitting by the bed, with her hands where Roxy could see what they were doing, cutting out rows of paper-girls and boys. Well, when he came in, Doria, smiling a little, blushing a little, bowed herself a little in passing out by him, and was gone. He only saw of her, that she had what people call "a homely but very intelligent face;" that her features were what people call "large and irregular," but that there was something fine about them, after all; something exceedingly delicate and fair, from the clear white skin, and the blue veins showing themselves through. And in part, perhaps, from the light drab dress she wore, and the very light rose-colored ribbon about her throat. Cad, laughing in a low, musical way, to see Doria run, comely kept her place; and was introduced in form, as "Miss Phillips—Caroline Phillips," to Dr. Joseph.

"What made Doria run so?" asked Roxy, laughing, and with her eyes on the doorway where she disappeared. The child laughed on and on, as if the slight frame would be shaken to pieces. "She couldn't help it," she said, when they remonstrated. "Doria run so;" and then she laughed on.

"What *did* make Doria run so, Miss Phillips?" asked Dr. Joseph, smiling.

"She is shy," Cad said. "She is afraid that —" indeed, Cad couldn't tell him. She would ask Doria what made her run so, when she went home. And Dr. Joseph's last words to her, as he stood with his hat, ready to go, was, "Don't forget to ask Doria what made her run so, Miss Phillips. You won't?"

"No, I won't;" with the musical laugh, and bowing her adieus.

The next morning, it happened that he came up with the Misses Phillips, on his way to the post-office. They, also, were going to the post-office; and so he had their company.

"What made you run, Doria?" he asked, laughing, almost as soon as he was introduced. For he knew by the liveliness in the eyes of both the sisters, what was in their thoughts.

"Because," she began, with something half-merry, half-defiant in her air.

"Because——"

"Yes; I can't tell you to-day."

"Will you tell me any day?"

"Perhaps I will. I don't know."

"What act shall I render, of penance or of service, to make sure of your telling me, some day?"

"You must just go your way, and not mind me any more than you would if I were a leaf on the wind."

By-the-by, the reader does not know that October had come at M——; that, already, at M——, some of the leaves were sere on the trees, and some of them falling. Did the reader think of this? A leaf went by them as they walked. It was this that suggested Doria's comparison.

"I shall mind the leaves that go by, then, not a little after this," replied he, laughing. "Now, I shall cross over to Miss Caroline's side. I shall ask Miss Caroline if she don't think this one of the pleasantest of days.

Miss Caroline did. Miss Caroline was glad the hot summer was over; glad that the autumn days had come, when poor, old fading Nature takes so grand an aspect; when the winds go by with so grand a sound. She was glad winter was not far off.

So did Dr. Joseph like the autumn. So did he look forward to the winter. But autumn was certainly not the time for any great exhilliration. It was, after all, a sort of burial time. It could be, as he thought, a rich, grand, good time, only to those whose clear faith in resurrections of all sorts, helped them to perceive a sublimity in all the processes, both slow and quick, through which a beautiful new life comes, in its time.

Miss Caroline thought the same; and her beautiful eyes had a softer expression, her voice a sweeter ripple, as she assented. As for Miss Doria, she was over there on the other side of Miss Caroline, walking demurely, and not once raising her eyes, not once speaking—only to say "Yes," once, when Cad asked her if she didn't think it true, that which Dr. Wethergreen had just said.

CHAPTER X.

"SAY, Doria! good Doria! what made you run? What makes you to this day, so stiff with me (only now and then, when, for a moment you forget what you are doing?) What is it? You shall tell me now, or I will be angry and stay away, until tomorrow evening, I presume." He smiled a little; but he was earnest and grave, withal.

November had come! Thanksgiving was close by. He had been out and in of late; as if he were the brother of the daughters, the son of the mother, who was early widowed, and who had no son. He had met Caroline Cunningham

there, one time and heard her say, "You! I'm so provoked, I don't know what to do! Mrs. Jones, the dumpiest, dowdiest woman in all M——, you know, has got her a dress just like my new one; exactly. And has it trimmed like mine; in a peculiar way, you know. I had mine trimmed so, that there needn't be another like it. I'm mad! They say, that, whenever any one admires it, or looks at it, she tells them it is just exactly like Caroline Cunningham's. Caroline Cunningham has got a dress just like it. Ain't it too bad?"

To this and a good deal more like it, he had seen that Doria just listened with her accustomed quiet and good nature; that Cad only laughed, and, as she looked over her worsted, said, "Ah, I wouldn't care if I were you."

"Will you tell me?" he repeated. He had been waiting for Doria to tell him why she had been so shy and reserved with him from the beginning.

"Yes, I want to; for then I shall be easier when you are about. Then you will understand me, let me do or say what I will. Still, I don't know how to say it; for it shows perhaps a want of trust in your manliness. But I *do* know, Dr. Wethergreen," now looking him earnestly in the face, "I have seen men as sensible and as little vain, perhaps, as yourself, who, if a simple lady of my age, (past the age when most girls are married, or engaged to be married, as you know) if she is unreserved and cordial with them, when she likes them, just as she is with the women that she likes; if she is glad to see them, when they come and lets them see it unequivocally that she is; sorry when they go, and if she lets them see this too, just as she would let a female friend see it; and if, as she is inclined, out of the rare pleasure she has in their rare good company, she says with her friendly looks and tones, 'Come again; come whenever you feel disposed; we shall always be glad to see you,' they believe that she thinks of nothing in the world but of marriage, and of having them for her husband. They believe that she smiles to this, and modulates her voice to this end, says 'Come again,' to this end."

"Ah, Doria!"

"They do! as sensible men as you, Dr. Wethergreen; for I have both heard and seen it. I've felt it too," with unsteady tones, "more than once. For I like gentlemen's company. I like to talk with them. I am spontaneously inclined to be unreserved with them in whatever I say; but I can't be. I have to watch myself, my eyes, my lips and my whole manner."

"This is too bad, Doria, if you think so!"

said Dr. Joseph, with deprecating looks and tones.

"I know so; for, as I told you, I have seen it and heard it; against others and against myself." Again she bowed her head and spoke with shaken tones,

"So I keep myself, in a way, braced up, as you have seen me, when single gentlemen whose age and position would seem to indicate them as suitable for me, are about."

Dr. Joseph now laughed heartily. Doria half laughed and half-cried.

"So, Doria?"

"So, Dr. Wethergreen, I am never truly myself with you, nor with any other unmarried gentleman 'of a certain age,' that I like. If, one moment, or one hour, I forget my caution and chat and laugh, on and on, as I would with a friend who already has a wife, or a betrothed, in the next I recollect myself; and then I long to say to you or to him, 'I wouldn't marry you, sir, if you *think* I would. I like you and like to talk with you; but I wouldn't marry you if you were made of gold; or, rather, unless you were made of gold, and so, fit for being taken to the mint and afterward used for benevolent purposes.'"

Dr. Joseph fairly went off his feet, laughing. And Doria laughed now without any tears in her eyes.

"If I were beautiful, like Caddy and many others, I should feel differently," Doria added, when they had had their laugh out. "For a beautiful girl does not *presume*, if she advances even so far. Or, if she does, all the allowance in the world is made for it, for her loveliness' sake."

"Ah, Doria! you don't know!"

"Yes, I do. I have had a chance. I have an uncle who is a fine man, and a rich one, and a widower. I have two cousins who easily attract, or, at least, who think they do, without intending it; even intending fairly to *not* attract; and I have heard what they have to say. It is in a few words of delicate utterance with them, always; for they are gentlemen. But I would a thousand times rather carry myself round stiff as Mrs. Isphichin, all the days of my life, than that such things should be said of me by such men as they are; rather than see the shrugging of shoulders, even so slight, and the lifting of the eyebrows, when my name was spoken. It is *you* that don't know about these things, Dr. Wethergreen."

"I mean that you don't know the character of your face and its expression, when you under-rate it as you do now, and as I have heard you more than once before. I like your face."

"I too like it; but I know that it is a homely face, for all that. No, Dr. Wethergreen! I know what you would undertake to make me believe. I do not want to believe it, trust me. I am willing it should be just as it is. I like my very homely face as well as Caddy or any one can like her very beautiful face. All is, a beautiful woman can go *her* ways, a homely one can go hers; but hers must be quieter, more unobtrusive, else shoulders and eyebrows are lifted very high in some quarters; especially, *especially*, if, like this homely woman who makes such long speeches this evening, she really likes to talk often with those gentlemen who are really worth talking with, and if like her they are impulsively apt to show their likings."

"Well, we will let it go so. But I dare say you have ten apprehensions where you need not have more than one."

"I dare say. But one can never know."

"And this is what made Doria run so?" laughed Dr. Joseph.

"Yes."

"What made her take such pains to conceal her goodness to Mrs. Mercer and little Roxy?"

"Yes. One thing more, and then you must go home; for I engaged to go over to Lowell street, to come home with mother and Caddy. I was to be there to take my tea with them; and you see," directing his attention to the mantle clock, "it is quite time."

"What is the one thing more?"

"Why, I am just as *sure*," she said, speaking with emphatic earnestness, "that neither would you marry me, as that I would not, under any circumstances, marry you. So there it is; the whole affair, before our eyes. I shall *know*, after this, that you will not misconceive my meaning and purposes. I can be ever so glad to see you; can tell you, in all manner of ways, that I like you, and you will understand that it is as I would like a brother. Exactly. That is, as I would like a brother who was well read, genial and manly, like yourself."

"I thank you, I am sure, Doria," said Dr. Joseph, with a kind voice, with kind eyes.

He shook hands with her; left his "regards for mother and sister Cad," and was gone; gone with bounding, sinewy tread.

Doria, her lips parted with a well pleased expression, looked after him until he was out of sight. Then she went, singing a pleasant air with good, grateful words to it, to prepare for her walk.

She went, softly humming the same pleasant air, as she crossed the square where few people were. And she said more than once within

herself—"It is so good to be thoroughly understood!"

CHAPTER XI.

BIRDY was not so much to Dr. Joseph in those busier, more prosperous times, as in the old days when he sat and waited, with none but her to comfort him. He *loved* her as well as ever, though; and admired her more; for when he saw how glad the little creature was when he came; how one minute she lifted her head and "poured her throat" in the long, long melody, and the next came eagerly clinging to the bars that separated them, pressing her breast against them, he knew how much she loved him, and how much she missed him when he was gone; and then he called her, with the tenderest voice, "Contented little thing!" and "Darling!" and told her, holding her to his breast or cheek, with both hands, that she was the dearest, best bird in the whole world, to sing and eat her dinner, and be so busy when he was gone; for Nan had many a story to tell about how birdy sang "all to herself" when he was gone; about how she went in once and she was busy eating her seed, another time and she was in the bath "trying to see how far she could make the water fly."

Little Kate came often tripping to see the bird and little Nan; for soon, between the girls, there sprang up a close liking. The delicate, town-bred Kate taught Nan all the prettiest steps she had learned at Mrs. Bundy's school, and many still prettier ones, that she herself, out of her graceful spirit, improvised as she taught. Nan, the practical, the round-cheeked, the round-limbed, the farm-bred, "took the steps" as well as she could, any way; and when out of breath with it, as she soon was, always, she threw herself into the wide arm-chair, made room for Kate; and, when she came, they sat there very lovingly, very contentedly together, while Nan taught Kate the Lord's prayer. Both of the fatherless ones thought this very beautiful—"Our Father who art in heaven." They both loved to say that, and to repeat it, before going on with the rest.

Mrs. Ambrose took comfort in hearing the words, as she went about her work, or sat at a window with her sewing. She loved all the dear Scripture words of protection and consolation; for once more was her boy far from her, in the rough world where so many dangers lay. She had heard from him once. He had reached San Francisco safely and was well.

"But I have a prodigiously uncomfortable feeling about the heart, mother and little Nan,"

he wrote, "at every thought of the dear old places, and the dear old friends in them. I had when I left, and before I left, all along, whenever I thought of it. It was as if I were wrung and twisted and screwed; and I wonder what made me come. I suppose it was the New England blood in my veins, the New England cordage along my bones and in my muscles. I imagine it was that. I remember that some English writer or other, who saw how, in our country, the son breaks away from the father, and both the father and the son from the old homestead, laid it to lack of attachment to friends and places. He didn't understand it at all. His *old* blood is so different from our *new*, you see."

His word to Dr. Joseph was—"Take good care of mother and little Nan. Don't let them miss me."

To his mother and Nan it was—"Be cheerful when I am away, that you may write and tell me that you are cheerful, that poor Jo may find it pleasant with you."

He sent enclosed two little rings of California gold, one for Nan, one for Kate. The rings, the grateful thoughts and words of the giver, that had their origin in the gift, were, after all, the most beautiful links of the band that kept those girls together.

Ambrose came across Ike Allen one day just before he left. It was a raw, early-October day; and the little fellow was purple and curled up in his old, thin, summer suit.

"Cold?" asked Ambrose, with his hand on the boy's head, and looking down with a smile into his face.

"Kind o' cold," shuddering from head to foot. "Mother's goin' ter git me some good, warm—some *good, warm* clothes"—he repeated the words as if his mind liked to dwell on them—"s soon 's she can. Father's lame, ye see. He havn't got but one foot, any way; and that's got sores on it."

Ambrose had heard how cunning lies are told to impose upon the credulous. The memory of it came now in the way of a caution; but he whistled it off, trusting in the honest face; and, above all, pitying the curled-up, shivering frame. He said, "Come—come with me, Ike," to the boy; took him round to Tenney's; and, in a few minutes, the boy was running homeward in a warm glow and with his bright eyes sparkling, "to show 'em ter mother! ter mother!" This was what he said to the laughing Ambrose, when he darted out of the shop on his way, habited in his strong, thick clothes, and carrying his old in a bundle.

Ambrose went one day to the old home of the

architect. He wanted, at the least, to see him, and show him a friendly face. But he had gone and left no sign of returning, or of his exact whereabouts. He should go first to Boston, where he learned his art, he told his neighbors. He thought he should soon go from there to some of the western cities; but was not certain of the measure. At any rate, wherever he went, whether he ever saw them again or not, his memory of their sympathy in his trials would always be kept fresh; would always do this one great thing for him, make him love his race better, and believe more confidently in the good there is in the human heart, ready to come out into exercise when the strong circumstances call for it.

Mr. Harvey's horse and carriage were, all along, at Dr. Joseph's service, whenever he had need of them to visit patients out of the town; and would be, their owner told Dr. Joseph, with sincere eyes on his face, until he was abundantly able to keep them of his own.

Mrs. Harvey knew and remembered all the young doctor's favorite dishes; so that, not a week passed, in which honest little Willy did not come and get hold of his finger, to lead him off, as he said with bright eyes, "over to our house to see what we've got for you!"

Mrs. Holmes was forever putting her right arm to all manner of movements and tests, to reassure herself and others of this—of this; that it was in all respects equal to her left; in some respects superior. And it was Dr. Wethergreen, with his cold water and his little pills and powders, that had done it! She sent for him to come whenever there was the slightest pretext. Her husband was willing. He was as anxious as herself to evince his patronage of the young practitioner. But he often laughed at her. And one day he told her that he believed she would now and then bump the boys' heads together to get up bruises on them, to be in want of some of Dr. Wethergreen's *arnica*, if nothing else would turn up.

Drs. Gravesend and Coffin were almost done laughing and shrugging their shoulders about "Dr. Wethergreen's practice." They tried some times to say something facetious tending that way; but were themselves conscious of failure.

And thus matters stood when Thanksgiving came; when Dr. Joseph, after having breakfasted with his aunt and little Nan, after having made it sure that Kate and her mother would come to dine and spend the rest of the day with them, went into the cars and sat down with folded arms, to be taken to his father's house. He had not been there since Thanksgiving, a

year ago; when, so far as his own affairs were concerned, he could only say, "By-and-bye, father! by-and-bye, mother," and so on.

Now he could have other things to tell them; and he longed to be there.

CHAPTER XII.

THE winter was ended. It was late evening, of the last day of the last month; and Dr. Joseph sat, with the book he had been reading open, under his hand, thinking it over. He could see that his patronage, the favor with which he was regarded there at M—— had been steadily increasing; inasmuch that, whichever way he went now, warm, friendly eyes beamed on him, friendly hands took his to their grasp. Especially the poor Irish blessed him; when by carefully watching his ways they satisfied themselves that now, with the rich calling him and favoring him, he was just as faithful toward them, just as patient and as tender, as when he had none but them and a few others as poor and humble as they.

He was thankful for this; thankful that to so many homes he had gone with healing on his hands; but he mourned for little Kate, whose beautiful feet lay so still then beneath the sod. Her Father in heaven called her; and his utmost care by day and by night had no power to stay her going. He thought of the child's animated, beautiful life, of all she was worth to her mother, to him, and to the large numbers of relatives and of "little mates," as she called them with loving voice; and his heart was sick, that, for all he could do, she had passed away. He felt then that for all varieties and degrees of success here on the earth, there are painful drawbacks; that in the midst of them there comes often to us this lesson that we so often need—"Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart." His mind dwelt on the lesson as it comes in the poet's words, and in the Saviour's—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." And he prayed that he might be kept from setting his heart on any earthly success, any earthly good; that when the good, the success, the treasure came, he might take it into faithful hands, take it with a grateful heart, to be sure; but with a fidelity, a thankfulness, turning first and last, and in the midst of all times to God.

Kate kept saying, "Our Father who art in heaven," with beautiful eyes, with a thrilling voice. She died as she said, "Our Father." He thought of this; thought how all the dying call upon the Father and the Saviour. And out of a heart melted at once into penitence and high

resolve, he asked of the Father that, not only in the hours of his death, but in all the hours of his active life, he might remember Him and call upon Him.

Tranquilized and softened by his reflections, Dr. Joseph's thoughts went back and forth, back and forth, through the bright winter days, the genial winter evenings; turning oftenest, as it must be confessed, to some rooms out on east Hanover street, where curtains and carpets and gilded volumes were radiant in the light of gas and of a glowing coal fire; and where faces were radiant with the welcome for him, with the inward intelligence, the inward enjoyment of life. He saw a lady of fifty-five in mourning, with a delicate face and thin black curls shading it, and with a quiet, high-bred air, who often looked up from her work or her reading to speak, or to smile at something the rest were saying. He saw a lady "of uncertain age;" (only Doria's age was no uncertainty to *him*; she had told him long ago that she was twenty-eight; just his age) saw her frolicking merrier than any kitten, when only himself, Caddy and mother, and those that she loved were about; and saw how, when widower Curtis and bachelor Blake came in and put their eyes on her, she wore, at once, the old manner he remembered seeing in old times set up against himself; the manner half defiant, half humorous, half earnest and grave, (if the reader *will* only, this once, allow us so many halves!)

He saw a younger girl, a more beautiful, a stiller girl, who sat contentedly at Doria's feet and looked up to her. He saw that her whole being brightened when he came; and often, at other times, when he spoke to her, and when their glances met. He understood, now that he thought long and closely about it, that as Doria's face and bearing, even in her utmost friendliness and unreserved cordiality toward him, said, as plainly as her lips had ever done, "I like you; but I wouldn't marry you if you were made of gold"—so Caddy's, the dear, sweet-voiced Caddy's said, "I love you. I will be anything to you that you ask."

But he would not ask her to be anything to him, poor as he was, in debt as he was. He would never need her so much as then; he believed that this was true. He could understand very well how happy it would make him, if she sat by him then, as so often he had seen her in the winter evenings sit by Doria, with her hands clasped, lying on his knee, and her sweet face upturned to his. But he would never take her away from her life of ease and plenty at home, and bring her to share *his* life of self-denial and uncertain prosperity. If another year there at

M—— did all for him that he might reasonably hope, he could ask her! And——

But he would think no more about it. He would put Caddy and the home with Caddy in it, away from his thoughts and go to his rest, that to-morrow he might be fit for his duty. He would so discipline his heart that his love should not fill it, or engross its powers. He would not stay by any idol; but, God helping him, he would go steadily forward in ripening his capacities for rendering and receiving good. Then if the time ever came when he could bring Caddy to his home, he would be found worthy of her; worthy and able to take her by the hand and lead her, through all her life with him, close beside the still waters.

CHAPTER XIII.

"WHAT is my sister Caddy thinking about?" It was Dr. Joseph who asked the question. He had been accustomed all through the spring and summer, to call both Doria and Caddy "sisters," and Mrs. Phillips "mother." He and Caddy were walking with a large company—from whom they were just then a little separated—near the Falls above M——.

"She is thinking that this is a beautiful world, and——"

"Well?" smiling, and with his eyes on hers.

"And that we who live in it ought to be very grateful and very pure. It troubles me thinking what a poor life I live, when I see how perfectly beautiful the waters are, and the sky, and the woods, and everything that one sees in the natural world." She turned her eyes from the leaping waters to the sunset sky, and to the islands in the river where the dark pines grow; and on her features lay the softened expression of delight mingled with pain. Dr. Joseph was at no loss to understand what she felt. He himself felt the same. He had felt it many times standing in that same spot. I suppose that multitudes have felt it standing there, and had their lives exalted thereby; so that the place is, as it were, one of God's own temples, made with His own hands, filled and consecrated to inspiration by His own holy spirit.

Dr. Joseph said something of this kind to Caddy. He drew her hand through his arm and held it in his, saying that he wished they might oftener come there together; wished that everywhere they might be together, sharers of the same life, the same endeavor, the same cares; wished that she might be his *own*, his cherished wife.

Caddy bowed her head and was silent, until,

the second time he said, "If it can be that Caddy wishes, or will consent to the same——"

Then, when she spoke, she consented to the same; with trembling voice, with tearful eyes, but with a heart very firm in its love and womanly trust.

CHAPTER VX.

NOVEMBER had come, ushered in with all her glory of many colored garlands, of clear skies and dew-bespangled turf.

Ambrose had come from California richer than ever, more generous than ever; but far less broad of face and chest, far less handy and spirited. When people asked for the cause, he said a few brief things about "one hard campaign off there that used him up;" then began to talk persistently of other matters. When he saw that neither his mother nor Dr. Joseph were satisfied, that they still kept grave eyes on his face, waving a light dismissal with his hand, he began walking the floor, merely adding, "This is all, mother. It is all, cousin Jo. I am as well as any man need to be, I assure you: And as happy. So come, Jo! Let's go and take a turn. I've got somebody at the City Hotel that I want to show you. No, mother, I don't bring him here at present. Don't say a word to Doria or Caddy, or anybody that I have any one there; for I've got a mighty nice plan in my head. A plan that I like," he continued, looking at Dr. Joseph meantime, and brushing the nap of his hat round with his coat-sleeve. "I want to tell you about it. Good-by, mother."

His mother's eyes followed him to the door.

"Good-by, mother," he repeated, laughing at her searching looks. "You shall know, mother, all in good time. It will be all the better for keeping; like the good corn-porridge you used to make when I was a boy."

He smacked his lips thinking of the porridge; wondered, he said, whether it would taste to him now as it used to; got a promise from his mother that she would make some and see, and then went. His mother, poor woman, stood some minutes in the same spot, thinking of his "used to;" new words for him, spoken with a new and to her ear, a sad cadence. She had heard it already several times, and he had only been at home two days.

He had taken a larger house in the same neighborhood; had bought it; and already it was in Affutt's hands (conjunctly with his own, his mother and Dr. Joseph's) to be beautifully fitted up and prepared for—"for you, good mother," he said, "and for good little Nan; and,

by the way, how she grows; how she improves, mother!—oh, but it is so bad that little Kate is dead! for she loved me, you see; and I loved her. As I was going to say—for you and Nan, mother, for cousin Jo and the little creature he is going to take home with him, and for me, when I am here.”

His mother hoped that he would always be there.

“No! no, mother! I must go and come; come and go. I must stir; this is natural for me. Although I believe I don’t feel altogether so much like it as I used to.”

His mother was not sorry for that, if he was as well as he used to be. She only wished that he would settle down as his cousin Joseph was going to do. There was plenty of room for it in his new house. The south-west room opposite Joseph’s and Caddy’s parlor—if, instead of taking that for his bed-chamber, as he had planned, he would have that fitted for him and *somebody else*, (some good girl like Caddy) and have his bed-chamber back of that! With the new Irish girl, Mary, to help her, she could easily take care of them all. Oh, if he *would* stay.

Well, perhaps he would, mother! Perhaps he would! Stranger things than that *had* come to pass in this world and in his day. Perhaps he would manage to like Caddy’s first bride’s-maid, pretty Mary Walton, whose attendant he was to be. He would try, mother! He would! She should see how he would try.

He laughed and went. His mother laughed then; but she sat down and cried as soon as he was gone. She looked over to the new house; and thought that there in that house, stately, beautiful as it was, she was to meet an overwhelming sorrow. But she said, “God will prepare me. He will be with me, whatever else fails. And if I can trust in Him.” Then she wiped her tears, and went about the house, making ready for the marriage; making ready to leave the old house for the new.

They were married in the evening, at church. It was Mrs. Harvey and Doria’s plan; Mrs. Harvey’s, because she knew of so many—Joseph’s staunchest friends too they were—who wanted to see them married; Doria’s, because she wanted something strong and summary in the proceedings, she said. Perhaps she calculated upon crying all the time, and upon feeling that she might in so large a crowd. She did cry all the time, at any rate; and people pitied her. People took her hands at the close of the services, and said, “I’ll be your sister now, Doria dear.”

Drs. Gravesend and Coffin were there to see the ceremonies. They saw the weeping; (there was

not a little of this done by one and another; for Mrs. Ambrose was there with her eyes on her boy, who was so fine a figure there by the bridegroom, with her presentiment lying heavy on her heart; and little Kate’s mother, filled with the thoughts of her beautiful darling; and many, many others, who in that solemn time felt deeply for the bridal pair, or felt deeply for themselves.) They heard the prayer for love, for heaven’s blessedness on the earth. As they listened to the words of the prayer, they had their eyes on the bridegroom and the bride, saw how a manly inspiration kindled his whole being; and how a reliance upon him who had chosen her, softened and irradiated hers. Their eyes met. They met again at the door going out; and Dr. Gravesend said to the other, “That was a fine sight.”

“Yes,” replied Dr. Coffin. “He’s a fine fellow. He’s generous and good-hearted. Caddy Phillips has done well; and I’m glad for her.”

“So am I.”

And they were. The old enmity, the old folly—thank God, was over.

Birdy, bless her! had her head tucked snugly beneath her wing all this time, at a window in the dining-room of the new house. When they came home from church, Ambrose tried to wake her to tell her about her new mistress and show her to her; but she only nestled a little in her gentle way, moved along her perch a little and then was still again.

“I had a bird—a dear creature,” said Caddy. She stood with Dr. Joseph and Ambrose watching the bird.

“Did you lose it?” asked Ambrose, turning round so as to face her.

“Yes, it flew away!”

“When?”

“Oh, more than a year ago. A year ago last August.”

“I wonder if you ever heard from her?” looking steadily at her; not looking at all toward Dr. Joseph.

“Yes. I heard that she was with one who needed her, and so I let her go. But I missed her so much; for I never saw so dear a bird. This one—is it yours, Joseph?”

“Yes; yours and mine; *ours*.”

She dropped her eyes a moment beneath his glance. Her heart, one saw, was in a tumult at the dear word, spoken with the dear voice. But soon she raised her head to look once more at birdy.

“It is the same color of mine,” said she, scanning it closely. “A beautiful color.”

“Are you a connection of the Cunnighams on Lowell street?” asked Ambrose.

"Mrs. Cunningham was my father's daughter by an early marriage," she replied, with questioning eyes on his face.

"That's it!" said he to Joseph, with a light, brisk tap of his fingers upon his palm. "And so," speaking to Caddy—"and so Mr. Cunningham is your round-about brother, cousin Caddy, my dear? And so he advertized your bird?"

"Yes," the questioning eyes going to and fro between him and Dr. Joseph.

"Caddy! Caddy Wethergreen!" cried Ambrose, coming a step or two nearer, "where—what have you done with the pin of California gold, pray? where is it?"

Caddy looked again at him, at her husband, who stood watching the workings of her lovely features, the kindling expression of her fine eyes, and at the bird. She asked her husband whether that was her bird; whether he was the one who needed it and sent her the brooch; and when she heard from them all about it, when Joseph took "the little sleepy-head," as Ambrose called her,

out and put her into Caddy's hands, she kissed her, "called her pet names," and cried over her. The tears, though, were in part of pity for her husband, that ever, in his life-time, he had been so lonely.

CHAPTER XV.

Our pages are already filled.

With Ambrose's friend at the City Hotel, with his mother's heavy presentiment, as well as with the good fellow himself, we have more to do.

And dear Doria's affairs—there is not a little to be said yet upon Doria's affairs. But here there is no room. *She* wouldn't mind their being huddled. She would like it best, on the whole; for she has a sort of instinctive repulsion toward all emblazonment of herself, or her proceedings. As this would not, however, suit us, or our readers, we shall take liberties with both in a sequel to this present story of Dr. Wethergreen's Practice.

A NEW ENGLAND STORY.

BY SOPHIA YORK.

CHAPTER I.

"I HEARD of a new engagement, when I was out visiting to-day," said Margaret Alston, after she had poured out five successive cups of tea, and sat down comfortably on her cushioned chair to drink her own. "Can you guess who it is, Sophy?"

"Let me see," said her sister, musingly, "a new engagement! why, we shall have a gay winter with so many weddings. Who can it be? Not Annie Johnson?"

"Annie Johnson! no."

"I am sure I cannot guess. Do tell me."

"Caroline Hardman!"

"Caroline Hardman! of all people, why I did not know she knew a man to speak to."

"Nor I," said Mrs. Alston, "her parents are so very poor, and their house is such a small, retired one."

"Way up the road—and how she dresses—why I am certain she never had a silk dress in her life."

"Silk," said the mother—"how is poor Jonas Hardman to get silk dresses for his daughter?"

"Well, I am indeed surprised—but you have not told as yet who the gentleman is. It takes two to make a bargain, Margaret."

"That is the most wonderful part of it; *that* you will never guess. You know they have been to Boston for a few weeks, and have just returned."

"I wonder they went to the expense," said Mrs. Alston, "people of narrow circumstances should understand that home is the cheapest place."

"Oh! but they had good reasons for going, mother, Annie Johnson told me all about it at the sewing society on Wednesday. She says Caroline has been working capes and collars for several months, and that they went to Boston to try to sell them. Annie met them in a fancy store one day, and heard them bargaining with the storekeeper."

"However good or fine her work may be, it never will not can pass for French."

"No, to be sure not; but Margaret, you have not told me yet who the gentleman is."

"I am coming to him as fast as possible. Mrs. Hardman and Caroline boarded at a small house,

opposite to the residence of Annie Johnson's aunt."

"Mr. Hardman staid at home then."

"Of course he did. Indeed I don't see myself why the daughter did not stay at home too. Mrs. Hardman might as well have gone alone, and have sold the capes and things, but some people never can learn economy. A journey of one hundred miles is no trifle for two people, and people who set up to be poor too."

Alas! for people when they, to use Mrs. Alston's phrase, "set up to be poor;" when, casting off the reserve which can do so much toward concealing the "nakedness of the land," they are constrained to come forward and say to their acquaintances, "I am poor, pity me." Such was the case with the Hardman family. The mother and father had in their youth enjoyed a life of ease; but now, when no longer young, they found themselves in consequence of a series of untoward circumstances, left to subsist upon a sum which scarcely allowed them and their daughter more than the bare necessities of life. Their house was the smallest in Hartville, their furniture the poorest and plainest, their dress the cheapest, and most unfortunately they were of that class who "cannot dig," and who "to beg are ashamed." Mrs. Hardman had for some years striven (as who in similar circumstances does not?) to make a good appearance, and on all occasions to put the best foot foremost, but at last worn out with efforts which were always unsuccessful, and desperate attempts to make both ends meet, when both ends stood so far apart, she gave it up as a bad business, and, to use her own words, "determined to try to deceive people no longer." All the village now heard of her poverty, and as usual all the village felt themselves entitled (that is to say, all the female part of it, for men don't do such things) to advise, to question, to condole, and occasionally to reprove. Caroline, the heroine of our story, whose sorrows, we are sorry to say, are but just beginning, was a modest, timid, humble-minded girl, who, notwithstanding her pretty face and good figure, was so accustomed to wear old bonnets, and cheap, ill-made dresses, that she said "she hardly wanted anything better now."

But let us return to the Alston family at their comfortable, well-spread tea-table. Let us hear what they went on to say about Caroline Hardman's engagement.

"The mistress of the house where they boarded," continued Margaret, "had one other boarder; a rich, handsome man, no other than the elegant Mr. Dexter, who spent a fortnight at the Eagle here, last summer—well, Mr. Dexter is the man."

"George Washington Dexter! the lawyer, the man of fortune, to whom I was introduced in the bar-room of the Eagle!" exclaimed Mr. Alston.

"The very same, papa, think of Caroline's good luck."

"How could they have accomplished it?" said Mrs. Alston, "but I always did think and say, you have often heard me say it, girls, that there was a good deal of cunning about Mrs. Hardman. There were one or two little disputes with her milkman that came to my ears, and that convinced me she was not the simple-hearted creature people take her for."

"But George Dexter is not a man to be taken in by anybody. There is no finer or more intelligent fellow to be found than he. An excellent family too, the girl has done well for herself."

"Indeed she has, papa, and what a change it will be for her, and I dare say she will be able to give her family a great deal."

"It must have been love at first sight, Margaret, they were not long away."

"Not more than three weeks, Annie Johnson says, though she did not call on them there. She would have been ashamed, she says, to tell her aunt, who is a very fashionable person, that she knew such poorly dressed people to speak to."

The next morning the new engagement was again a subject of conversation, and after breakfast Mrs. Alston said, "Girls, get on your bonnets, and we will go up to Hardman's and see how it is about this Mr. Dexter. I should like to know how the mother takes it."

"Oh, yes, I should like to go," said Margaret.

"So should I," repeated Sophy.

In the course of the morning, Mrs. Alston and her two daughters put on their silk dresses and worked collars, and spite of the dust, and the heat, and the flies, made their way up the road to Mrs. Hardman's little dwelling.

"Do look, mother, the gate is off the hinges."

"Yes, I must speak to Mrs. Hardman about it, it is quite time she should learn that a 'stitch in time saves nine,' but some people never seem to learn anything."

A narrow gravel walk led from the gate to the front door, which stood open, affording a view

of a very narrow entry, and an equally narrow staircase beyond. The party entered without knocking, and made their way into a little parlor as poorly furnished as possible, where a tall, meanly dressed woman sat, darning a piece of red and green carpeting.

"Good morning, Mrs. Hardman!"

"Good morning Mrs. Alston, how do you do, young ladies? *do* sit down, excuse my not being dressed, I really have so much work to do. I hope you are all well, Caroline is very busy this morning. I am afraid you will have to excuse her."

"Certainly. Sewing, I suppose."

"Well, that or something else—poor thing, a hard life she has of it."

"But they say there is something very fine in store for her. Now if we must believe all we hear, Caroline has done better for herself than half the girls in Hartville," said Mrs. Alston, good-humoredly.

"Yes—I suppose she has in one respect—but it brings a world of trouble on me this engagement, a very different thing in your house. Now, my dear young ladies, everything about you is pretty, and neat, and nice, and if a gentleman comes in you have nothing to be ashamed of. I confess I am not as well pleased as I would be with some one more in our own line, you know, but this Mr. Dexter is so grand and high in his ways, and such a poor way of living as ours is. To be sure he has not been down here yet."

"Do you expect him in Hartville soon?"

"To-morrow week, he writes; and what a heap of things I shall have to fix up. I am darning the carpet to-day."

"Well, I wonder now, Mrs. Hardman, that you keep a carpet down in summer. Not that I would take it upon me to advise, but a mat is a great deal cheaper."

"I know that, Mrs. Alston, but I had no money in the spring to buy mats, I had to leave the carpets down whether I liked it or no. Poor people must do as they can."

"It is a fortunate thing then that Caroline is engaged to a man of some property."

"So it will be in the end. But I would like to know how in the world I am to go to the expense of a wedding."

"A wedding need not be a very expensive thing. I always found, at our house, that an engagement was quite as costly a thing as a wedding—what with the wear and tear of your house, and teas and dinners—at least it was so in our family."

Mrs. Hardman folded her arms and sighed at the melancholy prospect.

"There is a great deal to be done by a little management though; for as you begin, so must you go on. I found it so. I allowed a great many things when Elizabeth was engaged that Becky never had at all. Where there is a large family of daughters you must stand up for your rights. In your case now, to be sure, it is different. Caroline is your only one, and you will naturally feel disposed to be very indulgent. Still there are limits. Men will expect to drop in at all hours, morning, noon and night; it is a troublesome habit, especially on sweeping days and ironing days, and one they must be indulged in, but not too much so. In your case it would be a good plan to say, 'We shall be in the parlor to-morrow by twelve, Mr. Dexter,' or 'Caroline has a little fine sewing, and cannot leave it before six in the afternoon.' If there is anything going on that you don't like to mention, say, 'there is sewing to be done for the poor,' anything like that goes a great way with young men. But of course families vary, and you will do as suit yours."

After more conversation of this nature between the rich lady, who had successfully managed two sons-in-law up to the day of their marriage, and the poor, hard-working one, who looked forward with dread to the arrival of her daughter's affianced husband, because they had so few spoons and such old chairs; and because the gate was off the hinges, and the parlor windows wanted several panes of glass; and because, although Caroline had a decent lawn, and a very respectable mousseline-de-laine, the old black silk Mrs. Hardman herself had worn for best for five years was very foxy, though it had been dyed twice, and there was no time to rip it apart now and have it dyed and made up again before to-morrow week;—Mrs. Alston and her two well-daughters took leave, not forgetting many messages and congratulations to Caroline.

Having finished the carpet, Mrs. Hardman went up to Caroline's little room. The door was bolted. "Let me in, Carry." After a little bustling and bustle inside, Caroline opened the door.

"How do you come on with your embroidery, my dear?" and the mother took a seat in the dingy little room. "Why! I do believe you have not done the first half yet, indeed I can't see that you have put a stitch in it this blessed day. How is this?—just as it was when I left you. What have you been doing?"

"Oh, I have a great many things to do always, mamma."

"Have you mended the hole in your mantilla?"

"No, mamma."

"Have you darned the stockings?"

"No, mamma."

"Or have you been trimming your bonnet over again?"

"No, mamma."

"It is very singular, so many things to do and not one of them done yet. Really, Caroline, I can't see the meaning of it. But your desk is open. I see it now, you have been writing a letter to Mr. Dexter—very affectionate, I suppose, but you wrote one yesterday afternoon."

"No, mamma, I have not been writing this morning, at least that is, not to George."

"Well, I am glad to hear it, idleness is a bad thing even if you *are* going to marry a rich man. How rich is he, Caroline?"

"I believe he has a few hundred dollars a year besides his practice, which gives him several hundred more," said Caroline, looking down, for the question was not agreeable to her. Sincerely attached to the man who had singled her out poor and friendless for the companion of his life, she felt all the awkwardness arising from the disparity in their circumstances, and with a nervous sort of irritability shrank on all occasions from any mention of it.

"Well, that is something indeed. Mrs. Alston has been here, and she spoke of him as rich. It is well they think so, indeed the whole thing will do very well altogether, except that he is coming here. If he would but stay at home in Portland now."

"But I want to see him again, mamma."

"And so do I, my dear, but the house is so small, and the entry paper is so dirty, and the mat at the foot of the staircase is not only black with dirt, but actually almost in two pieces."

Caroline endeavored to smooth away these difficulties. She was sure George Dexter would never observe the mat, and he must have seen small houses before, and as to the entry paper, he was very near-sighted. Nevertheless as she said it, she felt her heart sink within her at the thoughts of the meanness of their style of living, compared with what her lover had been accustomed to at home. After a few more remarks, Mrs. Hardman hearing her husband's step in the story below, left her daughter's room. As the sound of her footsteps died away, Caroline softly bolted the door again, and taking a pile of papers out of her desk, sat down again with a pen in her hand.

"How fortunate it is," said she to herself, "that woman's curiosity is so easily diverted into other channels. Poor thing, if she did but know, but it would be a pity to excite her hopes when I am not yet by any means sure of success."

The embroidery indeed! why I may make ten times as much by this." And beginning to write in good earnest, Caroline did not raise her head from her labors until she was summoned to dinner.

But somebody will want to know what all this means. To explain it, we must go back to the short period which Caroline and her mother spent in Boston, that period which was the means of bringing her into contact with George Dexter, that period which proved to be the most eventful and the saddest of her life.

One day when her mother was out looking for a cheap shop, Caroline sat in the little parlor sewing in company with the mistress of the house, who entertained her with praises of her own family, and of one son in particular, who wrote for Magazines and newspapers.

"And a heap of money he has made by it," continued the satisfied mother. "Why he made me a present of the very shawl I have on my shoulders now. To be sure it was second-hand then, but I never could have bought it myself, old or new."

These words set Caroline thinking. "Why could she not write too? Why could she not be earning money in this way, instead of the laborious one upon which her hands were at this moment employed?" In a moment her resolution was taken. As soon as she got home she would try what she could do. But George Dexter, with his charming manners, his handsome eyes, and his intelligent, refined conversation, drove these thoughts out of her head before night. It was love at first sight on his part, it was almost love at first sight on hers. He was the first young man with whom she had ever been intimately acquainted, having met him at her friend's house the year before in her native place, although he had never visited her. The slight acquaintance thus begun ripened into something much stronger, when they accidentally met at the little private boarding-house in Boston. There was a timidity which delighted him in Caroline, a reserve exactly to his taste, but its wearing off upon better acquaintance was exactly to his taste too. Before Caroline left Boston he made her promise to marry him, and assured her that he would spend as much of his time with her as business would permit. Arrived at home again with new sensations, new hopes, Caroline felt herself awakening from a dream as she entered the little dwelling once more. She had forgotten all about it, and now once more opening her own little door, she began again her former life of privation. Her writing-desk covered with dust recalled to her mind the plans

she had formed, which she was not now long in beginning to put into execution. There was a weekly newspaper in Hartville, and to the editor of this she meant to send her first efforts. In a few days she concocted a very respectable story, signed *Aurelia*. A few days more brought her a small sum of money, small to be sure, but more than she could make by embroidering for three times as many hours as she had written. Emboldened by success, she determined to keep her secret to herself, and to make further attempts.

"Where did you buy that ribbon for your neck, Caroline?"

"At Goodman's, mamma."

"Mrs. Stephens gave you more for the collar than you expected?"

Caroline was puzzled. There were two paths before her, the straight path of truth and rectitude, the winding, dangerous road of deceit. It was a sad hour for Caroline when she first put her foot upon the latter. Waiting an instant to collect herself, she replied, "Yes, she gave me a dollar and a half more for the collar than I expected. Mrs. Johnson too paid me very well for the cuffs, she said they were just like French." Mrs. Johnson had indeed said the cuffs were just like French, but she had taken them, and asked Caroline to wait a week or two for the money. Mrs. Hardman had not a very predominant idea of arithmetic, but if she had understood this science to its utmost depths, she would never have mistrusted Caroline.

"Caroline has been uncommonly successful with her embroidered muslin this month," said she to her husband, "it is well she took to it."

"Yes, poor child, it is bad for her eyes, but we must have money."

"She will be enabled to make a more creditable appearance before George Dexter when he comes. Have you observed how neatly she has trimmed her old straw bonnet, quite equal to a milliner, the bow at the side hides the place where the straws are broken? Caroline has a great deal of my good management."

"He will be here in a few days now."

"To be sure he will, and do you see how I have contrived everything to look as well as possible. The carpet is darned in fourteen places; he will never see those holes, this one is not so well managed; but I have put the arm-chair over it, and I hope, my dear, you will never move it away; and your map, see, I have hung it over here where the paper is so dirty, and——"

"But I think that great clean square of paper where the map hung before, is a greater blemish than all the dirt on the paper and paint put together."

"How provoking you are, I do believe men like dirt better than anything else. By keeping the room dark, and by turning the sofa with the face the other way that will not look badly, it will scarcely be observed."

"Perhaps not," said Mr. Hardman. Poverty had made him peaceful, by no means its general effect.

"I have borrowed a few spoons from Mrs. Caldwell, and a sugar-bowl from Mrs. Butler. You need not remark them."

"No."

"It is to be hoped it will not be long, I don't think I could manage it for more than a week. If you see anything in the papers about business being very good in Portland, you can just mention it, you know."

No answer, for Mr. Hardman was gone. He seemed to have grown dull with misfortune, for whilst his wife busied herself in all parts of the house, cleaning and preparing for their expected son-in-law that was to be, and Caroline trembled with nervous anxiety at the prospect of the miserable poverty her beloved could not help witnessing, he wandered about the house as unconcerned as if nothing at all were the matter, as if poor people's rich connexions never came to their humble dwellings to discover the ill-concealed marks of the narrowness of their circumstances.

CHAPTER II.

THE important day came. Mrs. Hardman, who at other times did all the work of the house with her daughter's assistance, had now hired a little girl of about eleven years old to do different things about the house, "for," said she, "it will never do to have Caroline leave Mr. Dexter to iron her dresses or fill the lamps. It was a fine morning, the room, that is, the parlor was swept and dusted, the arm-chair was placed exactly over the hole in the carpet, the shutters bowed to a becoming darkness, becoming not only to Caroline's complexion, but to the paper and paint, and the inhabitants of the house awaited the arrival of George Dexter with an anxiety entirely new to them.

Poor Caroline!

"My gracious me!" exclaimed the little girl, bursting into Mrs. Hardman's room, "if there is not a strange gentleman gone and walked into the parlor, and opened the shutters and pulled the arm-chair away from the hole, and, and——"

"A strange gentleman! Nancy, why who can be?"

"I don't know, ma'am, indeed, but I had gone

and fixed everything so nice for Mr. Dexter. Well, he'll be here soon, I suppose."

"Hook my dress, Nancy, and I'll run down and see."

Mrs. Hardman hastened down and found Mr. Dexter himself in conversation with her daughter. He arose immediately and greeted her with affection, and entered into an account of his plans. "He could be absent but two weeks at present—he was at the hotel—but he meant to pass much of his time with them, their village was so beautiful, and he himself so great an admirer of rural scenery. He and Caroline had been arranging walks in the neighborhood, there was a bridge, and a mill, and a wood that she would show him." Mrs. Hardman was delighted. "Not a bit high," said she to her husband, "he don't hold himself at all above us, and when I apologized for the paint, he said, 'if there is one thing he hated above all others, it was the smell of fresh paint.'"

Satisfaction on all sides. Caroline was perfectly happy, and as she walked through the street, her acquaintances stole many a glance at the tall, handsome man who accompanied her. Mrs. Alston persuaded Mr. Alston to call on him; he was invited there to tea, and the mother could not refrain from thinking how much more suitable a match it would be for one of her lively, well-dressed, accomplished daughters, than for the humble, the dispirited Caroline, who had never learned a note of music, or worn a flounce in her life. The example was followed. All Caroline's acquaintances ventured upon another act of patronage, and the very ladies who the week before had beat her down in the prices of her cuffs and collars, now invited her and her lover, and spent more than the price of the cuffs and collars upon her in the way of lights and eatables. Hartville was like most American villages in this respect; it was impossible to ask any three people to your house without buying and cooking enough food for thirty, and those who would have gone placidly to bed without eating a mouthful after tea if at home, were not satisfied, if they happened to be next door, with less than a tremendous supper.

So passed on the first week; Mrs. Hardman found that her kind friends relieved her of all the trouble of entertaining her son-in-law, and she herself got more ice-cream in six nights than she had eaten before in six months. The ice-cream and the company were not quite so novel to Mr. Dexter, but he was a amiable man, and felt grateful to the Hartville people for their attentions, although he would have preferred walking with Caroline on the bank of the stream

which ran past the town, or sitting alone with her in her mother's little parlor, spite of the dirty paper and the great hole in the carpet.

The second week began. Caroline was expecting him one afternoon; she heard footstep in the entry and voices; presently George came in.

"Here is a letter, Caroline, for you, a boy came at the steps and gave it to me."

Caroline took the letter. She knew the hand it was from the editor to whom she had sent her last tale. She left the room to read it.

"Good news from your friends, I hope," said George, as she entered the room again.

"Oh, yes!—no—I mean—it was nothing at all."

"What is the matter?" asked he, in nowise curious about the letter, but very much so with regard to her agitation.

Caroline turned very red. How could she tell him the truth? how could she confess that she owed to the contents of that letter and others of its kind, the dress she had on, the trimming on her bonnet, the very shoes on her feet? She was not practised enough in deceit to have recourse to an actual misrepresentation of facts, but she did what was very nearly as bad, she hesitated—she trembled—she said what had no meaning in it at all, and finally changed the subject as awkwardly as possible. Her lover said no more, it did not enter his head to suspect Caroline of an attempt to deceive him, and the evening passed on very much as usual, with the exception of a slight coldness, a reserve on both sides.

"What was that boy here for, Caroline?" asked her mother, toward the close of the evening, "he has left a great deal of mud on the steps, I could see it plainly by the light of the moon."

"That boy always does leave mud," said little Nancy, "the last time he was here I told him so."

Caroline took up a new book the Alstons had lent her, and began eagerly to discuss its merits.

"What did he want, Nancy?" asked Mrs. Hardman.

"He never says he wants anything, ma'am, he just leaves the letter for Miss Caroline and goes."

"Are we to go to Mrs. Henry's to-morrow to tea?"

"Yes, I believe so, your friends are all very kind."

"No kindness at all," said Mrs. Hardman, "just what they ought to do, just what I always do for them in such cases, don't I, Caroline?"

Caroline had begun to prevaricate on her own

account, but she could not yet do it on her mother's, so she made no answer.

Mr. Dexter took his leave, it was half an hour earlier than usual.

"He does not seem pleased to-night, Caroline, what can be the matter? I am sure the lamp burns well, and the hole in the carpet don't show much, to signify, and you look very nice, perhaps he thinks I am shabby in this old tea color, I can tell him the old tea color was a handsome dress in its days—or maybe it was not that—do you think it was?"

"No, mother."

"Perhaps he did not like being troubled to bring in that letter for you, it was thoughtless in the boy to trouble a visitor with it. Some message, I suppose, about the cuffs or the capes."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Of course you don't want anything said about it to him. I'll keep your secret for you the next time one comes, let me alone for hiding it, Carry."

Caroline made no answer. She fell into a fit of musing. The result of her reflections was a determination to caution the voluble Nancy. Early the next morning she called her to her own room.

"Nancy, I have something to say to you. Do you see this quarter of a dollar?"

"Yes."

"Nancy, if you will mind me in one thing, I will give you that to buy yourself two pair of new stockings. Do you remember the letter a boy brought for me yesterday? Well, now, he may bring another some day, I wish you to bring it to me as quietly as you can, without letting anybody in the world know anything about it—do you understand?"

There is a natural liking for a secret in the human mind, that and the bribe together filled Nancy's heart with delight.

"Daresent he, nor she, nor nobody know?"

"Nobody at all, Nancy, it must be a profound secret between you and me."

"The very next one then that comes, I'll bring it in somehow that no living soul shall see it."

"Very well, Nancy, I will trust to you, now go down and clean the knives."

Very little relieved in mind by the means to which she had had recourse, Caroline sat down to her sewing, and after some hours began to get ready for her morning walk. Meanwhile in came her mother.

"Carry, dear, how much longer does George mean to stay in Hartville, do you think?"

Caroline just then recollected that he was ever going to leave Hartville.

"Because, my dear, no dress will last always,

even the best and stoutest of silks; the tea color is getting too bad, though I do save it with aprons all I can; you know while he is here I can't be going about in my old calico as I used to. When do you say he is going? not that he is not a very fine young man, a remarkably fine one—but——"

"His fortnight will have expired in three or four days now."

"Call it four days, four days, let me see, four afternoons, I really do *not* think the tea color will stand four afternoons, and the old black is entirely gone; but there he comes now—are you ready?"

Caroline was nearly ready, George had not to wait long: her bonnet and gloves were soon on, her cravat tied round her neck. They had a long, delightful walk, all awkwardness had passed away, affection, which finds ways and means of blossoming everywhere, seems to take a more rapid growth in the woods and fields, the sweet face of Nature is always in harmony with pure and heartfelt emotions. So the lovers found it this morning. The walk was prolonged beyond the usual hour. Mr. Dexter gave Caroline an account of his family and connexions, of his future prospects, and dwelt with much earnestness on the happy period when he should be enabled to call her his wife.

"In a year at furthest, but meanwhile I shall pay you frequent visits. I shall now be obliged to return in a few days, for I must not neglect my profession."

"When shall I see you again, when may I count the days, and be glad as I used to be that they are gone, George?"

"Not for some months, I am afraid."

"Months!"

"Yes, it is only by a close and unremitting attention to my practice for another year, that I can hope to take you home with me to Portland, and to support you there in the manner I would wish."

So they wandered on, talking sometimes of love, sometimes of housekeeping, for although love *may* be entirely independant of housekeeping, and housekeeping should *not* be entirely independant of love, something else is required to keep that ugly visitor away from the door, who is said to oblige love to escape by the window. By degrees they reached the village again, when looking at his watch, the lover suddenly recollected an engagement he had entered into to dine with some gentlemen at the hotel. "I will be with you at dark, or a little later," and after a tender parting, Caroline opened the little front door and rejoined her mother,

whom she found engaged in making pies for the week.

"Do come and help me, my dear, or are you too tired?"

"I am tired, mother, but I will come and give you a little assistance as soon as I take off my things."

In a few minutes she was at work, and her hands kneaded the dough as skilfully as if her thoughts had been there instead of—where? Perhaps some young reader can answer the question.

The day passed on as usual, so did the evening, and the next day, until the next evening.

It was a pleasant afternoon, Caroline and her lover sat in the parlor enjoying the precious hours that they now feared were drawing to a close. Daylight faded away, twilight came on, still they sat there unconscious of anything but their own perfect happiness.

Suddenly the door opened, and in burst Nancy with a light. Placing it on the mantel, she busied herself in moving about the room, and making all the usual bustle attendant on the setting of a tea-table.

"That is a very active little servant of yours."

Caroline mechanically turned her eyes in the direction of his. As she did so, quick as lightning Nancy brandished a letter over her head, and as quickly concealed it again.

"What have you there, Nancy?" asked Mr. Dexter.

"Nothing, sir," and she frowned at Caroline.

"She is a silly child," said Caroline; "what did you say your eldest sister's name is?"

"Frances, the eldest, and then Mary and Agnes."

Here Nancy's pantomime was repeated.

Mrs. Hardman came in, and tea was soon served. Tea in New England is by no means the simple meal it is elsewhere. Mr. Hardman helped most plentifully to his wife's pies, and conversation did not flag. He had got into a discussion with his son-in-law respecting criminal law in Maine. Mrs. Hardman was giving Caroline, in an under-tone, an account of a visit she had paid to Mrs. Alston that afternoon, and repeating everything that had been said by every one present. Nancy flitted round the table when called on, and at other times stood in silence behind the mistress of the house. She continued to brandish the letter whenever Caroline looked up, and by placing her finger on her lips, shaking her head and winking her eyes at intervals, endeavored to convey the idea that she was a most faithful confidant. Much of this was visible of course to Mr. Dexter and Mr. Hardman. The

indulgent old man looked upon it as some child's play not worthy of notice, but the lover saw in it something of much more meaning, especially as Caroline's heightened color betrayed the agitation, which her trembling voice did very little to conceal.

When tea was over, Mr. Hardman went up stairs to smoke a cigar. Mrs. Hardman followed Nancy out of the room to see that the china was properly washed and put away.

"Excuse me for a moment, George, I must go wash my hands."

"Go," said he, coldly.

No sooner had Caroline left the room in quest of Nancy, than Nancy as suddenly entered it by the other door in quest of her.

"Where is Miss Carry?"

"What do you want with her?" asked Mr. Dexter, sternly.

"Oh, *you* ain't to know: it's a secret, *you* shant be told about the letters—where's Miss Carry?"

"Stop, Nancy. Miss Caroline gets letters, does she?"

"My! but she'll murder me if I tell you."

"But I saw one of them the other day, the boy gave it to me for her."

"Well, he won't do it no more, I told him this very day to come round to the back gate."

"Who are the letters from?"

"From Mr. Simpson, I think. I know I take letters to him sometimes for Miss Carry."

"Mr. Simpson! who is he?"

"Well, he keeps the book-store up the street."

Caroline at this moment entered the room.

"Caroline!" said Mr. Dexter, "how is this? What is this silly tale I hear?"

Caroline made no answer.

"Can you explain this matter to me? Listen, Caroline, I am not to be trifled with; is it true that you have written to, and are in the habit of receiving letters from a Mr. Simpson?"

Anybody else would in her place have confessed the truth, but Caroline's strong, natural reserve, increased by long years of poverty and mortification, forbade this straight-forward measure. She stood immovable. It was a dreadful scene. Jealousy and anger were imprinted in plain handwriting on her lover's forehead: terror and secrecy upon her own. Not many words were spoken on either side, for before a quarter of an hour he rushed from the house, and the next morning George Dexter left Hartville for Portland.

All this occurred as many as ten years ago. Caroline, now an orphan, keeps a girl's school in Hartville, Mass. As frequently happens, good is wrought out of evil, for the patient, care-worn school-mistress gives three prizes in a year, one for the most studious, one for the most amiable, and one (she calls it the highest) for the most candid.

QUENTIN METZIS.*

BY E. K. BOWEN.

IN the year 1470, there was at Antwerp a celebrated blacksmith, who employed many industrious and able-bodied workmen, and whose forge rang daily to the sound of the hammer, and glowed in the fierce red light which imparts so fantastic and strange a character to every object that it illumines. Amongst his workmen was one who seemed never to have been destined by nature for so laborious an employment. He was one of those exceptional beings who afford striking evidence of the power of the will, united to physical debility; for in this young man, who was no other than Quentin Metzis, it was moral energy that supplied the place of strength. He felt that it was art and not labor for which he was qualified; yet he had patience to resign himself to his destiny, and a spirit of emulation which taught him to excel even in this laborious profession. He was the blacksmith's best workman, and his master loved him, despite the apparent singularity of his character; for, inwardly conscious of a capacity for better things than striking the anvil or shoeing a horse, he did not share the habits of his comrades. It was not that he despised them, but they wearied him, and when once his task was done, he liked better to be alone with his own thoughts than to drink with them.

One evening that the smith's workmen were going to a neighboring tavern, they invited Quentin Metzis to accompany them. He thanked them kindly, but declined.

"What is the matter with him?" asked one of the workmen of his companions, when Metzis was out of hearing.

"He is in love," was the reply.

"Well, what does that signify? That is no reason for not drinking, but rather the reverse."

"Very true; but he is sad, and it is that which prevents him from drinking."

"Then he must see love in a wrong light; for I am in love too, and I am merry."

"Yes; but you are not in love with a girl who is too rich and too handsome for you, and that is what has happened to our poor comrade, who is passionately attached to the daughter of a man who will only bestow her upon a painter; and

as no one can make pictures with a hammer and anvil, the poor fellow is quite out of heart, and unless the father changes his mind, which is not likely, Quentin Metzis will probably never marry his sweetheart."

And the two speakers returned to their bottle, without troubling themselves further about the sorrows of their comrade.

As to Metzis, he had, as we have said, left his companions, and, his eyes fixed on the ground, had turned down a well-known road, under the guidance of his heart rather than of his will. Suddenly he stopped before a door which he had no right to open, and concealing himself in the shade, waited, with his eyes fixed on one of the windows of the house, for that which he similarly awaited every evening—for that which gave him strength for the toil and burden of the morrow. Then, when he had seen the window open—when, as in a celestial vision, a silent gesture had answered his gaze, and after this long-desired moment of happiness the window had closed again, he retraced his steps, repeating to himself, as he did every evening, "She loves me;" and on these three words he based all his visions of the future. Sometimes a gleam of hope would shoot across his soul; but when, on quitting some church where he had been praying, he contemplated the *chefs d'œuvres* of the period, and reflected that he must do as much before he could gain his object, the momentary hope vanished, and he felt that it was impossible.

Returning home after this transient happiness, he found his mother, whose constant prayers were for her son, awaiting him. He embraced her affectionately, saying,

"Good evening, dear mother."

"How are you this evening, Quentin?"

"Quite well, thank you, mother."

And embracing her once more, without perceiving the tears which rose to her eyes, he retired to his chamber, to be alone with his dreams.

Hence arose the long, feverish hours of watching, in which the artizan dreamed of art, the humble blacksmith of glory, the unhappy lover of love; hours which consumed half of the night, and left him sadder and more powerless than before.

There are sorrows which can be held under

* From the French of Alexandre Dumas.

sufficient control to conceal them from the eye of strangers, but cannot be hidden from a mother's love; and every morning, when Metzis went forth to the forge, his mother gathered from her son's pale face how many sleepless hours he had passed. Without ever having learnt it from his own lips, the poor woman fully comprehended that her affection was no longer all-sufficient for her son, and she waited till he was gone to let her tears flow without restraint.

One morning, however, he was so dejected, and looked so deadly pale, that his mother would not let him go out; and in the evening, at the hour when he was wont to seek the spot where all his happiness was centered, he was too feeble to leave his bed.

The reason of this was that despair and discouragement had at length overpowered the strong will which had struggled against them, and that his scanty hours of sleep had given place to utter sleeplessness. He was a prey to one of those illnesses which, varying in form and name, are the same in fact, which waste the frame, dim the eyes, and wear out the heart.

It is in moments such as these, when all hope forsakes us, that we cling the most closely to the blessings which still remain; and Quentin Metzis, unable any longer to seek the daily solace of a glimpse of his mistress, turned for comfort only to his mother's love.

He opened his whole heart to her, and the poor woman, who had nothing to give but her own life for that of her son, perceived at once, that unless it pleased God to work a miracle, that son must die.

One of his brother workmen, who often came to visit him, reached his door one day, at the very moment that a procession in behalf of the sick was passing along the street; he held in his hand one of the wood-cuts which were distributed by the members of the brotherhood.

"Well, Metzis, how are you?" asked the blacksmith on entering.

"Much the same, thank you."

"I have brought you one of the wood-cuts given by the brethren."

"What for?" asked the sick man.

"To cure you," replied his friend. "The procession in behalf of the sick has just taken place, and some of these wood-cuts have been distributed; and as I know what wonderful cures they effect, I have brought you one."

"But there are illnesses which they cannot cure," said Metzis, "and mine is one of those."

"Why should you be so depressed? It is that which does you harm. Try and divert your mind, and you will get well. If the cut only

serves to occupy your thoughts a little, it will do some good. Take it, and amuse yourself with copying some of those figures of the blessed saints; it will help to wile away the time, and that is something when one is ill."

The blacksmith then shook hands with him and went away, leaving the miraculous wood-cut on his bed.

When Metzis was alone he relapsed into his usual musings, without appearing to remember his friend's words. His mother, absorbed in prayer, watched beside him like a guardian angel; but at length perceiving that he was falling asleep—a rare blessing for him—she rose and left the room.

When he awoke he found the wood-cut still lying on his bed, where the blacksmith had left it, and took it up mechanically, saying, "It is not that which can save me!" Yet he no longer looked at it with indifference, but contemplated it first with devout attention, and then with prayer, till the tears filled his eyes, and it seemed to him as if those quaint figures of saints smiled upon him, and whispered to him the words of hope, to which in suffering we are all so eager to listen. He dashed away his tears, regarded the wood-cut with increased attention, then rose from his bed, went to the table, seated himself, and began to copy the figures of the saints, whose countenances still smiled upon him. He appeared rather like a sleep-walker obeying the dictates of some hidden influence, than a waking man acting in accordance with his own will, so immovably fixed were his eyes, so low and feeble was his breathing. Yet an occasional smile gleamed upon his face, for now his copy began to assume form and likeness to the original—his own saints began to smile encouragingly upon him. It seemed as if the miraculous cure foretold by the blacksmith were really in progress; for Metzis began to perceive with his waking eyes the goal of which hitherto he had only dreamed. At the end of half an hour he stopped; drops of perspiration stood upon his forehead, as upon that of a man awaking from an agitating dream. He looked at his work—

The likeness was perfect—the joy had well nigh turned his brain!

His poor old mother, bending over his chair, had understood all his sufferings, entered into all his dreams, and, doubtless, while her son had worked, she had done her part in prayer. Certain it is, that when his task was done, and Metzis rose, he met the eyes of his mother beaming upon him through tears of joy—they had no need of words to understand each other, and were soon locked in each other's arms.

At that moment his visitor of the day before made his appearance; Metzis hastened toward him, and to his surprise embraced him eagerly.

"You have saved my life," said he.

"How so?"

"With your wood-cut."

"Ah! I knew that; and so you will come back to the forge?"

"No, I am no longer a blacksmith."

"Indeed! what are you then?"

"I am a painter."

"You? a painter?"

"Yes, I," and with these words Metzis left the room.

"I see, the illness has taken a different form, and touched the brain. Your son is out of his mind," said the blacksmith to Quentin's mother.

"God is great and merciful, and he has had pity upon him," said the old woman, "that is all."

"We shall see," replied the man. "I shall wait till he comes back," and he sat down beside the table at which Metzis had been working, and upon which he perceived both the original wood-cut and the copy. He was struck dumb with amazement; the miracle was obvious and palpable. He awaited with impatience the return of his friend, the cause of whose sudden departure he did not understand, and was curious to learn.

Half an hour later Metzis reappeared.

"Where have you come from?" asked the blacksmith.

"From my father-in-law's house."

"Are you married, then?"

"No; but I soon shall be."

The blacksmith reverted to his original idea that his friend was mad. He, however, wished to be sure of the fact before he left him, and asked him whom he was going to marry.

"A young, rich, and beautiful woman, who is to marry none but a painter. I have just offered myself."

"But a long time must elapse before you are qualified to paint a picture, and perhaps in the meantime your wife may grow tired of being the widow of a future husband."

"She will wait for me."

"Well, but what have you done?"

"I went, as I have told you, to the father, and asked of him his daughter's hand, which he refused me."

"Very naturally."

"He told me that he had promised her in marriage to a painter, and could not give her to any other, unless he were a better artist, and when, on his asking me what I had done hitherto, I told him that I had worked in iron, he laughed in my face."

"And what did you do?"

"I merely said to him, 'Give me six months' time, and if in six months I do not bring you a better picture than your son-in-law elect, you may give him your daughter.' He went on laughing, and challenged me to do it. I accepted the challenge, and am going to set to work immediately."

"You are quite right there; you should strike while the iron is hot," said the blacksmith, who borrowed his figures of speech from his profession.

"And now many thanks to you, my good friend, for it is to you that I owe all this. In six months' time you will come to my wedding."

And the two young men parted, the one to go and tell the news at the forge, the other to commence his task.

Then began an obstinate struggle between the artizan and the artist, which, as it became more and more arduous, entailed many an hour of deep discouragement, in which the poor votary of painting gave way to exhaustion and despair on beholding how little he had effected, and how much yet remained to be done. He had not, indeed, mistaken his calling so strangely revealed to him by the wood-cut, but so much study and labor were required in order to attain his end, that but for his undying love, for the gratification of which renown was an essential condition, he would have abandoned his design as impracticable. But time rolled on, and Metzis, absorbed in the pursuit of his object, disappeared from his accustomed haunts, or only came forth occasionally to take breath before renewed efforts. At length he reappeared amongst men, pale and wan from victory, as others are from defeat, but with a glance of triumph in his eye beaming with the consciousness of power unalloyed by pride.

Six months had completed the miracle foretold by the blacksmith, and he now knocked eagerly at the door before which he had so often kept his hopeless watch.

"Oh! is it you, Metzis?" said his future father-in-law, on beholding him. "Your six months are passed, and you come to acknowledge yourself beaten!"

"You are mistaken," replied the artist, "I have still a fortnight before me, but, with your leave, I had rather be beforehand."

"Is not that presumption?" said the father.

"No; it is only very natural impatience to secure the prize I have labored so hard to gain, now that I have won it."

"Won it?"

"Yes, indeed. The proof of it is too large to bring hither, or I would on no account have

troubled you; but if you will have the kindness to come with me, you can give me your opinion of a picture which I purpose to present to the church in which I am married."

The two men went out together, and a week after Quentin Metzis was married, to the great wonder and admiration of all the smiths in Antwerp, before an altar-piece, of which the centre compartment represents the burial of our Saviour; the right hand one, the presentation of the head of John the Baptist at the table of Herod; and the left hand one, St. John in the cauldron of boiling oil. This painting is to be found in the Sistine Chapel of the Church of Notre Dame at Antwerp, and is one of the best performances of Quentin Metzis. In front of the same church, which contains the first effort of the painter, is to be seen the last work of the blacksmith; a well, of which the iron decorations were shaped with the hammer, not with the file.

The singularity of his marriage, his previous profession, and, above all, his indisputable talent, acquired a great reputation for Quentin Metzis. It is always an attraction to the public if there be something strange or poetical to shed a romantic interest over the man whose works they admire or seek to purchase. The English possess this taste in a peculiar degree; thus Quentin Metzis has become a great favorite with them, and so

many of his pictures have passed into their hands, that now, with the exception of two or three, it is difficult to say what has become of the productions of the painter-blacksmith.

Amongst them, we may, however, specify, besides the painting before which his marriage took place, his own portrait and that of his wife, both of them to be found in the Florence Gallery, and two scenes from the life of our Saviour—the Virgin and Child, and the Christ and his Mother—full of the poetry of religion.

His other works are so scattered that it would be impossible here to give a list of them.

Such was the life of the blacksmith, Metzis, thus epitomized in the Latin verse upon his tomb:—

"Connubialis amor de Mulcibre fecit Apellem."

Quentin Metzis died at Antwerp at the age of fifty-nine, in the year 1529.

He was first interred in the church of the Chartreux de Kie, and his body was afterward removed to the foot of the tower of the cathedral, where his monument now stands with this inscription:—

**"QUINTINO METZIS,
INCOMPARABILIS ARTIS PICTORIS ADMIRATRIX,
GRATAQUE POSTERITAS, ANNO POST OBITUM SECLARE
CLO. 10. C. XXIX.
POSUIT."**

THE FIRST LESSON.

BY W. S. GAFFNEY.

"DEAR ma! see what a pretty rose," exclaimed a beautiful little nymph of about five summers, as she held the bright emblem of love in her lily white hand. "Is it not very pretty?"

"Yes, dear!" the mother replied, "but it will not remain long so. Its little life-string is broken even now, and its sweet fragrance is floating on the air but as the last ray of the sun lingering upon the face of departing day. Its beautiful bright petals will soon fall to the earth, and its fragrance depart forever!"

"But," continued the child, "I will always keep it so. I will not pull it to pieces as little Anna does. It is so sweet! How many kinds of flowers are there, dear ma?"

"Many, very many, my sweet child!" the mother replied, "and all robed in different hues; but there is a garden far away where is flowers of a different grade from these, and all robed alike in pure whiteness."

"But mine is so bright, and so pretty, and I mean to keep it so!" reiterated the child.

Here was Faith—ay, even such as might "remove mountains." No teachings of earth, no philosophic reasoning could shake this first formed impression. Child like she was firm in her simplicity. "It is bright, and I mean to keep it so!"

Would you turn the waters of the ocean from their unfathomable bed?—would you pull down the cloud-capped mountain with the implements of art?—even so might the mind of that innocent one be *reasoned* into reason. Oh, heart of child! Oh, mysterious simplicity! Oh, innocent creature! You may talk to it of sorrow, of misery, of fading beauty, but your words are unmeaning. It has never felt the chills of disappointment; it has never writhed beneath the pangs of affliction; and its guileless faith knows nothing of the emptiness, the hollow professions and cold-heartedness of the world; and would to God that the cup may be broken ere it be lifted to its lips!

"But you spoke of a garden far away, dear ma! and of pure white roses."

"Yes, my child," responded the mother, "and I will tell you something about them, provided you will promise to listen attentively."

"Do, dear ma, I will be so glad to hear you."

"Well, you recollect little Flora, with whom you have played so often in our own pleasant garden? You recollect, too, her sweet blue eyes, her soft, ruddy lips and bright golden ringlets?"

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And you recollect that, one bright morning her little fairy form was stretched upon a stand, and her lily white hands were crossed upon her breast, and she lay *so still*, as if sleeping? A tender smile was on her face, and sweetness lingered upon her ruby lips; but no earthly sound fell upon her ear, for she lay in the cold embrace of Death. Her tender life-string had been snapped asunder, even as that of the beautiful rose which you hold in your hand. Her beautiful brow, once crowned with the halo of merriment, now lies in the cold ground, but her little pure spirit is transformed into a beautiful bright flower, robed in everlasting whiteness, and is now blooming in that garden far beyond the skies, and which we call Eden.

"The flowers of this earth, my dear, are bright, but fading. They spring into beauty from out the bosom of mother earth, and at the will of our heavenly Father, but they live for a short period. And He who in His goodness carpeted our earth with these beautiful flowers, gave us also blossoms that will be to everlasting! They may not remain with us always—yet will they not fade! And of such was little Flora.

"Now then—will not my little daughter be ever good in this life, so that when God calls her spirit home it will roam in that beautiful garden forever and ever?"

"Yes, dear ma! but I like my red rose, it is so bright, and I——"

Her lips faltered—the tongue refused to utter the half told sentiment of the heart—the moral is obvious—the lesson was premature. The language of earth failed to touch the sleeping chords of reality, nor did Time ever open the fount!

Death enters all homes—of the rich and of the poor, of the high and of the low. It has paralyzed the efforts of age, and prostrated the schemes of manhood; it has dispelled the happy visions of youth by taking the fairest and brightest from the social group; it has clouded the bright dreams, and placed its signet on the laughing brow of childhood; and it has crushed the mother's fondest hope. Alas, for the instability of earthly things!—alas, for the ties that we nourish!

Fain would that mother have said, "It is bright, and I mean to keep it so!" but no—

"Born in a world where flowers of fairest hue
First fade away;
Herself a rose, she lived as roses do—
But for a day."

THE STORY OF JEREMY LONG, OF POTTSBURGH.

BY FITE MORNER.

TRAVELLING by railroad is very apt to be dull business, especially where it is continued for any lengthened time without cessation; but now and then the peregrinator picks up a companion in the cars who proves an inexhaustible reservoir of amusement. It was my good fortune to fall in with one of this class on a recent trip to Gotham.

As I stood leaning against the "cabin" of the New York Central Railroad Ferry at Albany, my attention was attracted by a long, lank, bony specimen of humanity, who stood clinging to a carpet-bag with both hands, and gazing through a quizzing-glass at the objects on the opposite shore. He was immediately entered on my lists an oddity. His figure was surmounted by a white, "wide-awake" hat, with an original improvement thereto in the shape of a long, fluttering red ribbon. Underneath the hat was a crop of short black hair, surrounding a face which was endeavoring to look austere and dignified—with but indifferent success. A ministerial-looking, white kerchief was tied about his neck in a manner seeming at the point of strangulation; while underneath appeared a very dark checked shirt, which vainly endeavored to cultivate acquaintanceship with the kerchief, leaving the brown neck bare for about an inch. Otherwise, his apparel was plain black, with the one glaring exception of a fashionable, short-waisted, red velvet vest, from one of the pockets of which dangled a long, heavy silver watch-chain.

I had but just completed my survey of him, when the ferry boat touched the opposite shore, and amid the general rush he was soon lost to my sight. But as I was about to step upon the platform of a car, I was accosted by a heavy voice behind me with—

"Spring up, sonny!"

I complied, and turned indignantly to see who had thus addressed me, when—

"Oh! beg pardon, sir! I didn't see your whiskers! But you're such a small person—such a very small person, that, really—but never mind that!"

It was the man of the white kerchief.

While speaking we had entered the car, and I found myself seated at his side, congratulating myself on the prospect of an interesting ride.

He introduced himself as Mr. Long—Jeremy Long, late of Pottsburgh, and in return inquired my own name, which I gave.

We conversed upon the various topics of interest—the weather—the scenery on the road—the fugitive slave capture—the Maine Law, &c. &c.—on all of which I found my companion well informed. At the Poughkeepsie station Mr. Long retired to "refresh his corporeal system," he said; "not having grubbed since the previous day." He returned, complacently wiping the crumbs from his lips with a red silk handkerchief, and remarked, as he took his seat,

"They have huge bivalves in this section of the country, sir. They are first-rate—very first-rate. I am told that the quality of the fruit increases in a direct ratio, sir, from the time an individual leaves Pottsburg until he arrives in New York—is it so?"

"I am not aware, sir," said I, "never having extended my travels as far as Pottsville."

"Pottsburgh, I'm much obliged to you. Pottsburgh! Then, probably, you did not know Appleton Potts, sir?"

"Well—no, sir—I believe not."

"Dry up, a half a second, if you please," said he, "I, a—" and taking a key from his pocket he arose, adjusted his glass, and began fumbling in the carpet-bag. He soon produced, therefore, a packet of papers, tied around with a string, whence he drew forth a well-thumbed manuscript. This he handed to me. I opened it and read—

TO AN ASPIRING MAID.

"Upbraid me not! I never swore——"

but further perusal was checked by the stranger, who exclaimed,

"Well—do not read it now, I beg, Mr. F——. Who do you suppose writ that?"

I could not tell.

"Well, no—naturally not," said he. "Perhaps you had not inferred, during our conversation, that I was a—a—a—ahem!—a polck, a bard?"

"No, sir," said I; "candidly it had not occurred to me; but since you have directed my attention to the fact, it appears reasonable for me to anticipate that such is the case."

"Right, sir—correct—very correct."

A pause ensued. I now determined to hold my peace, and allow the strange man to unburden himself of the tale which I felt sure he was achieving to tell. At length—

"Oh! these women—women!" said Mr. Long, with a deep-drawn sigh. "Would you believe, sir, that an individual of my appearance would fall in love—in love with a woman?"

"It is a very common disease with the sex, I believe," said I, deferentially, beginning to wonder if this austere personage was going to make me—his junior by a dozen years or more—the confidant of his love affairs?

"True," replied he; "and that article of poekry which now so calmly reposes in your palm, was a direct result of a transaction of that nature. You see—but thereby hangs a tale!" and Jeremy Long, late of Pottsburgh, arose, divested himself of his hat and white kerchief, glanced at his watch, scented himself, cleared his throat, and began—

"You see, Pottsburgh is one of those bewitchful, retired little hamlets where civilization is not more than skin-deep; where maidens dally and lovers sigh, unmolested by the rude arm of the policy officer; where Augustus J. Potts keeps a dry-goods store; where the late firm of Long & Carver formerly run a saw-mill on the banks of a lovely stream that rolls through the green forest, and glides, in swan-like majesty, over the dam; where—but I am straying from my subject. Excuse me, sir, and I will endeavor to confine myself to simple facts.

"In Pottsburgh I lived, and pursued my humble callin'; was very generally a popular fellow, (speaking as though it was somebody else I am talking about,) took the lead in all the frolics, apple-parins, dances, pic-nics, and etcetera and etcetera, which came off in the village. It was not known that I was a poick, and consequently I was treated with all the freedom and familiarity extended to other men. There were those, indeed, of the girls, who would sometimes poke fun at me, after the manner of those parts; all which I took good-naturedly, being willing to look down on the little creatures a-enjoying themselves—even at my expense.

"It was at an apple-pairin' at Squire Cheerly's that I made the acquaintance of Kitty Fencer. She was a lovely creature, with soft, dewy, red lips, light, curling hair, downy cheeks, and such eyes! From the moment that I first beheld her, I resolved that marry her I would. It was a silly resolution, sir, which I thank heaven and Appleton Potts for preventing me to keep! The truth of this will appear to you, sir, when I tell you that she was the merest *nite* of a woman,

three feet high or thereabouts, and I am, as you see me—long.

"I went home with her from that parin', which was about four miles from where she lived. Her folks came after her about ten o'clock; but I prevailed on 'em to let her stay, and I would see her safe home. I was glad I had met her *there*, for I was conscious how ridiculous I should have appeared walking at her side—and first impressions being most lasting, I thought it real lucky that I had met her where I could carry her home in my cutter.

"Oh! sir, I can never forget that night, that happy night, as the pale moon shone down on us two—me and her—tucked so cozily under that buffalo; she snuggled up close to me, laughing and joking so merry all the way; and I driving them two blood horses like greased lightning over the smooth snow, with my heart knocking against my ribs hard enough for her to hear, if she tried.

"I had not been acquainted with Kitty very long before the village gossips began to talk about us, and it seems to me never was such fun made of a courtship before in Pottsburgh. Well, there was a large fund for it, I'll allow. It looks comical to me, now, to think of my courting such a little thing—but I was in love; and when a man's in love his reason is tucked away in some old cupboard, there to remain until the knot's tied.

"Well, I'm glad some one else took compassion on my folly and strove to rescue me; but oh! how I could have cursed that man at the time. I could kiss him now. Don't laugh, Mr. F—, I can kiss—and this kissing propensity of mine was an active worker in my redemption.

"Kitty Fencer had not long been a resident of Pottsburgh; if she had 'a been, she would never have imbibed that prejudice of hers—for such a kissing set as there is in Pottsburgh you never see.

"It was not hard for me to see that Appleton Potts was trying to wring in to Miss Kitty's favor; but I had my hand in, and Kitty had kind o' took a liking to me. To be sure Potts was a better looking man than I, and Kitty had told me so, but I never imagined that anything had ever passed between 'em. And I knew, that, spite of his good looks, Potts was not near as clever a fellow as I; besides that, I am a man of property, sir, and was considered worth more than any other man in the neighborhood of Pottsburgh, which fact had a most wonderful effect in softening the angularities of my person with the feminines.

"One evening I went to see Kitty, and was

met by her with a face covered with smiles, as she took my hat and hastily led me to a chair. She then began fumbling in that mysterious pocket of hers, and finally fished up a letter, which she handed me to read; while she took a seat by my side, 'to help me laugh over it,' as she said.

"A glance at the thing showed me that it was polkry; I hastily looked at the bottom of it, and there was the name—'APPLETON POTTS.' I read it, and at every line I waxed madder and madder. It was an avowal of love, sir—an avowal of love—to my intended! This alone was sufficient to fire up the indignation of a man with a jot of spirit in his breast; but, sir, judge of my rage when I read also the lines—

"'Jeremy Long is a butcher's son—
A butcher's son is he;
The son of a butcher he was, is now,
And evermore shall be.'

"Sir, I was dumb with passion; my face glowed like a fiery furnace; I tore the letter in a thousand fragments and flung it from me. I arose and seized my hat, vowing that I would flog the black-hearted wretch within an inch of his life, or perish in the attempt. But Kitty clung imploringly to my coat-tail, and screamed out,

"'Oh! don't go now, Jerry—wait 'till to-morrow—don't go and leave me, there's a good fellow—I was going to have *such* a good time with you this evening!'

"I yielded, sir, partly because a man ought to always yield to the voice of entreaty, when he's in a rage; partly because I was afraid my coat would be torn; (my very best, sir,) and partly because I had no particular objection to enjoying 'such a good time' myself. So I smothered my rage, and seated myself by Kitty's side; somehow my arm found its way over the back of her chair, and thence around her waist; and then we talked love, you know—love. We had just about got it settled where we would live, and etcetera; when I felt so precious neat that I turned and snatched (what I thought was all right enough) a *kiss*.

"Alas! sir, I hit her *prejudice*! Did you ever see a woman in a perfect fury? I have—and, I am ashamed to own, I *let* that little girl put me out of the house!

"As I sprang into the road, hat in hand, and heart in my mouth, who should I meet but Potts—that cursed Potts. The moon shone fair and clear; Kitty stood on the steps and saw the rencontre. She made but one bound into the road, and in the twinkling of a saw-log Appleton Potts,

son of Augustus J. Potts, was in that house, the door was bolted, and I was rolling my eyes at *the moon*!

"What thoughts crowded my brain, as I stood there, statue-like, in my sadness? Was this a preconceived scheme? Was I a dupe? Was Potts successful? Well, sir, I finally placed my hat on my head and spread myself across the snow-crusts fields home.

"The die was cast. Appleton Potts was *in*, and I was *out*. It didn't take but little while for all Pottsburgh to know the tale; genius is proverbially sensitive, sir, and I could not stand it; so I kind o' concluded that it would be as well for me to sell out and travel—for my health.

"But, sir, I am comforted by the reflection that the Pottsburghers have discovered, ere this, what a genius they have sent from their midst; and Kitty Fencer may yet weep over the day when she rejected him whose name she shall at some future time see enrolled in the calendar of fame. I left several poems to old acquaintances in Pottsburgh, and one to Kitty Fencer—that one, sir, which you now hold, and which I have now the honor of requesting you to accept, as a slight token of my sincere regard for you.

"Read it not until a week shall have elapsed, when I shall be far away on the billowy ocean, bound for distant lands."

I was profuse in my expressions of gratification at Mr. Long's tale, and assured him that it should be laid before a sympathizing public.

The poem proved to be as follows:—

TO AN ASPIRING MAID.

"Upbraid me not; I never swore
Eternal love to thee;
For thou art only three feet high,
And I am six feet three.

"I wonder, dear, how you suppose
That I could stoop so low;
'Tis only few can tie a knot,
Though all may fix a beau.

"Besides, you must confess, my love,
The bargain's scarcely fair,
For never could we make a match,
Although we made a pair.

"Marriage, I know, makes one of two,
But here's the horrid bore;
The priest declares, if you are one,
That I, at least, am four.

"'Tis true that moralists have said
That love has got no eyes;
But *why* should all my sighs be heaved
For one who has no size?

"'Tis usual for a wife to take
Her husband by the arm;
But pray excuse me should I hint
A sort of fond alarm—

"That when my arm I offered you,
That happiness to beg,
Your highest effort, dear, would be
To take me by the leg.

"I do admit I wear a glass—
Because my sight's not good,
But were I always quizzing you,
It might be counted rude.

"And though I use a convex lens,
By all the gods I hope
My wife will never look at me
Through Herschel's telescope!

"Then fare-thee-well, my gentle one,
I ask no parting kiss;
I must not break my back to gain
So exquisite a bliss.

"But if you ever love again,
Love on a smaller plan;
For why extend to six-feet-three
A life that's but a span?"

MY FIRST LOVE.

BY CLARENCE MAY.

THERE is something beautiful in the language of flowers—something that is linked with associations that time can never destroy; and like an enchanter's wand, they call into being the shadowy dreams that lie sleeping in the heart, and bring back sweet memories of other days.

'TWAS thus I dreamed one sunny day, as I wandered along a fair stream, that is endeared to my heart by pleasing recollections from my very childhood. Forgetting that I had intended to imitate the occupation of that "prince of anglers," of whom we have so often read, I strolled on until I reached a favorite retreat, and there, as Willis has said, I "found violets."

"There is to me
A daintiness about these early flowers,
That touches me like poetry."

As I gazed upon them, my thoughts went back to the olden time—to my school boy days in all their holiday excitement, and my gentle companions with whom I roamed to cull the early cowslips, and twine them into wreaths to place upon their fair young brows.

But among those "shadows of the past," that stole so softly to my heart, there was one o'er which I lingered longer and more fondly than the rest. It was the dream of my first love; and I will whisper it to you, gentle reader, if you promise not to laugh at my sentimental—non-sense, some may call it.

I was just at that interesting period of my life, when I began to fancy myself a man—that is, about eighteen—when I accepted the invitation of a dear "chum" to spend the summer vacation with him at his country home. I soon felt quite at ease after our arrival, for it was a delightful residence—one of those fine old mansions that combine both beauty and comfort; and the scenery around it, beautiful and romantic enough to captivate any one far less enthusiastic than

myself. Fishing excursions and rambles in the country were planned every day, to my infinite satisfaction; for after the weary confinement of a school-room, nothing is so pleasant as out-door recreation; and still, as if our enjoyment was not yet complete, frequent mention was made in the family of the expected visit of a dear cousin from the "sunny South," to which all looked forward with the greatest eagerness.

At first I paid but little attention to these remarks, but as the time drew nearer, I began to feel no slight curiosity to behold this paragon of beauty and excellence, as they were constantly describing her to me. In fact, scarcely a day passed without my being told something concerning her, that would be sure to interest me. Did any one sing and play well, "Cousin Louise's" voice and execution were pronounced to be far superior; did any one read or sketch well, it was said that "Cousin Louise" would please me far more. "Your tastes are so similar," said they, "and we are sure you will be friends at once."

This was really beginning to be pleasant, for even at that early age, I was an ardent admirer of those finer feelings and accomplishments in woman; and you will not wonder that I anxiously awaited the period when I should meet one, who now seemed the very ideal of my dreams.

The long looked-for day at length arrived. It was a lovely evening in mid-summer. Softly did the low winds fan the sleeping flowers, and never did nature seem clothed with such a magic charm. We were all collected on the portico, when a carriage drove up to the gate, the steps were let down, and a slight form sprang out, and ascended up the gravel walk. The family were instantly collected around her, even intercepting her passage to the portico, with such exclamations as, "My dear cousin Louise," "Oh, I am so glad;" and I, who, of course, kept in the

background, inwardly wondered whether she would safely get through such a vigorous reception.

But at length she reached the portico, and we were introduced. Her beaming eyes met mine, as I warmly clasped her hand, and never will I forget that exquisite moment. The dream-girl of my imagination stood before me.

In person she was tall, and gracefully formed, and her complexion pure and fair as the tinted coral. This was rendered still more dazzlingly beautiful, by the heavy masses of dark brown hair that waved over her temples, and fell like a shadow upon the snowy neck. But the most striking feature in that pure, almost sad countenance, was the eyes—large, dreamy, and of the most brilliant jet, with an expression that was irresistibly lovely. There is a charm in the eye—that mirror of the soul—that may not be written or told; and it was in those pensive orbs that I read something so familiar and dear, that one glance was enough—I was deeply, irretrievably in love!

You must remember I was eighteen, and not laugh at my enthusiasm. I was truly—or at least I fancied myself truly in love, which sometimes nearly amounts to the same thing; but be that as it may, I still remember how I enjoyed those exquisite moments, which now steal back to me like some pleasant dream; or, as one has said, "like hidden music heard in sleep."

The next day we passed together in the parlor, with music and books. "Cousin Louise," as I familiarly called her, played and sang with much feeling and taste. I dearly love music, but it must be of that kind where energy, spirit, vivacity and strength are combined, without which music has lost its sweetest charms, and has no more soul than a statue. Preserve me from lifeless, soulless, middling minstrelsy, when I expect something better; for I would have it gush forth with the whole soul, heart, and strength, and then I am lost in admiration. Ah, never will I forget those sweet ballads that Louise warbled for me in those days gone by, for they were indeed the very *poetry of music*, and such as linger in the memory as something too beautiful entirely to fade away.

We were soon like old friends. The familiar poets, over which we had both lingered, almost from our childhood, were the key to unlock the sympathies of our hearts, and reveal our inmost thoughts. The charmed pages of "Childe Harold" and "Lalla Rookh" assumed a new interest for me, when I heard passages breathed from *her* lips, and her child-like and enthusiastic admiration of them. Byron was her true ideal

of the poet, but still she was passionately fond of "Lalla Rookh."

"In this poem," said she, "I discover so much that is in perfect harmony with my own thoughts and feelings, and it is expressed in such simple, yet beautiful language. There is nothing forced or unnatural in it; everything is so easy, fresh, and graceful—a beautiful Eastern flower, rich and gorgeous in all its oriental colors, and breathing its fragrance to the heart. And not only the poetry, but the air of deep romance that lingers around the whole plot, has endeared it to me. The story of the beautiful princess—the description of the journey, in all its oriental luxury—her love for the young minstrel, the disguised sovereign of Bucharia, and their joyous meeting at the end, adds so much interest and glowing imagery to the poetry, that I read it often, and always with pleasure."

Thus passed those pleasant summer days. Louise was the constant companion of all our walks, drives, and excursions; and added materially to our enjoyment—to *mine*, I know. I am afraid I was selfish in my devotion to her alone, but I followed the natural impulses of my heart, and as she seemed to encourage my attentions, I was happy. It was upon *my* arm she leaned when weary; it was for *my* assistance she looked when she wished to sketch some admired landscape; and it was for me she sang and read the most.

The day previous to our separation, we all wandered along the banks of a beautiful stream, not far from the mansion; and Louise and myself found ourselves alone in a favorite retreat, and seated together upon the mossy turf. It was a lovely day, though very warm; and the exercise had brought a soft flush to the cheek of my fair companion, who was twining the flowers we had gathered in the tresses of her wavy hair, with which the fragrant air was dallying as it kissed her pure brow. She was in the gayest mood, delighting in everything—now warbling a note of some ballad, or making the wilds re-echo with her musical laugh—while I was lying at her feet, and likening her to "Titania," the queen of the fairies; "Cytherea," the fairest of nymphs; and I know not what, for I had clasped her snowy hand in mine, and was just on the point of making an ardent declaration of my love, when my friend Harry suddenly burst upon us with the startling intelligence that a heavy thunder shower was approaching, and that we had better seek shelter. Inwardly wishing the poor fellow somewhere else, just at that moment, I was forced to comply; but determined to reveal my attachment to Louise by letter, if I would not

have an opportunity of doing so before her departure.

The next morning Louise left us. We were all collected on the portico, where we had first welcomed her, but it was with sadder hearts that we now bade the gentle girl good-bye. Slowly she passed from one to another with an affectionate farewell, and at last reached me. Clasp- ing her hand, and obeying a sudden impulse, I drew her to my heart, and for an instant pressed my lips to her own. Gently extricating herself, she sprang into the carriage.

"Louise," I exclaimed, "you are not offended?"

She turned to me a face radiant with smiles and blushes, and throwing me a few flowers she held in her hand—was gone.

Ah, how does memory, faithful memory, still treasure up that sweet and smiling face that last met my gaze, and how those flowers are pre- served and guarded as a precious memento of happy days, forever gone!

Has there been anything since then to repay me for the swelling ecstasy of my heart in those early years? I scarcely know. It has been well

said, in "Hyperion," I think, that "the life of man upon this fair earth is made up, for the most part, of little pains and little pleasures. The great wonder-flowers bloom but once in a life-time."

A month after, I was seated in our little sanctum, busily engaged in poring over the classic Virgil, when Harry burst into the room, saying that he had just received a letter from Cousin Louise. "She speaks of you very kindly," said he, "and says she will never forget those happy hours she spent in our Northern home."

How I thanked her.

"But," continued Harry, "I have not yet told you the best part. She was married last week."

"*Married!*" exclaimed I, starting from the chair, and dropping Virgil inglorious at my feet.

"Yes, to a wealthy young planter, to whom she says she has been engaged for some time; and she earnestly requests us both to visit them at their beautiful Southern villa."

So ended MY FIRST LOVE!

ALMOST A ROMANCE.

BY FRANK LEE.

PEOPLE that have travelled are so fond of saying—"When we were in Florence, or the winter we spent in Rome," &c. Now, I poor devil! can't use the phrase they rattle off so glibly, but when I *do* go abroad, the first place I wish to visit is Genoa, "*la superba*." As there seems no probability of my starting this week—to-day is Saturday, and I have lost the *lining* to my purse—I shall tell you a little story, the scene of which is laid in my favorite dream-haunt, though I have always intended to save and cook it up in the first of my series of "Letters from Abroad." The earliest tale I ever wrote was a sentimental romance within its storied walls, and, as this is the *last* sentimental one I mean to write for an indefinite time, why should not my labors in this line end where they began?

Near the old palace of the Prince of Doria, stands a stately mansion that once belonged to—the Lord knows what great family—but at the time of which I speak, had been made the abode of a wealthy American lady, ordered there for the winter by her physician, and her two charges, a fair niece and fairer daughter.

It would have been a hard task to find two more lovely girls, than those children of the great republic, and though Genoa was that season crowded with the wealth and fashion of Europe, the faces of the painted beauties of France, and the proud dames of England, were at a discount.

Alice Greville was of Northern blood, though reared amid the orange groves of the sunny South, with complexion soft and creamy, like the leaf of a camelia, large dark eyes, like the first violets that peep out from among the wood-leaves, a profusion of billowy, golden hair, silky as the braids on the forehead of a Madonna, such as Italians always worship.

Alice had acute poetical sensibilities, that the retirement in which she had lived only deepened, and existence had passed in wearing those glowing visions, which are bright as frail. Alice Greville was a dreamer, enthusiastic, aye—and I do not fear to use the word—romantic! Youth without these loses half its charms. A girl trained and educated until every natural impulse has left her, who moves, thinks and speaks by rule, is about as interesting an object

as a well-made automaton dressed by a French milliner. Give me bright dreams, high hopes, unchecked sensibilities for the young—God knows they will soon enough learn those lessons the world ever teaches! Let them have a little of ideal enjoyment—aye, a time for dreams. I am glad that a few years of my early life were spent in an old, rambling dwelling, into the half of whose many-cornered apartments the sun never shone freely, round which great trees stood like sentinels, over whose casements vines grew in unpruned luxuriansness—I thank heaven, that a portion of my life was thus passed—I am glad that I have been a dreamer.

But this is not to my story, so let me return, though I could write a volume from the memories which cluster round my warm spirit, and my heart goes back to the long galleries it so loved, and will not be recalled.

Reader, when I finished that sentence I dropped my pen, and lost myself amid the host of recollections that returned to my bosom like spirits to their desolate haunts. I sang under the old trees, and stood in the window, while the moonbeams slanted through, a cool wind from the groves of the buried Past fanned my brow, and I was again a child. But a passing step roused me—I look round and say—"Was that ever *my* abiding place"—and come back to my task; so Mr. Peterson needn't look so cross, you are not going to lose the story after all.

In a small apartment that opened out of the grand reception-room in the old palace, sat a merry group. Mrs. Greville was reclining in a cushioned chair, with her pretty niece on a low footstool at her feet, her great eyes full of mischief, and her little mouth full of smiles. Near the casement sat Alice, leaning back in a quaint-carved seat, her hand still holding the book from which she had been reading, though it was closed, and the long fingers gleamed out like sculptured ivory, from their contrast with the stained oak of her seat. Her delicate feet cased in embroidered slippers, that had been the envy of many an English duchess, were resting on a cushion of crimson satin, which caught the rays from the chandelier, and flashed them back as in mockery.

Her robe of rich black silk was singularly

becoming, and the fall of heavy lace like a shadow on her neck and arms, and those braids of golden hair which seemed constantly changing in their hue, were ornament enough for the beautiful head.

To complete the picture—for the very prettiest portrait must have its auxiliaries—a tall, graceful youth was flung on a low couch near, in an attitude pleasing from its very carelessness. Alice's guitar lay beside him, and ever and anon, during the pauses in conversation, he would sweep his fingers across the strings, waking broken chords of melody. In spite of his careless mien and mirthful sallies, there was an expression in his black eyes, when raised to the face of that young girl, which told a secret the eyes will speak, and the smile which broke over his feature when he addressed her, softened them like sunlight on a gloomy landscape. The eagled buttons on his tight uniform, betokened that Harry Milders was a lieutenant in the United States Army, though they did not add that he held the rank of third cousin to Alice, and claimed to be first—but he did, and was her most devoted lover—a bit of information he didn't put in, probably thinking it was, as the advertisements for lost property, say—"Of no value to any but the original owner."

They were discussing the novel which Alice had been reading, and of course their opinions very materially differed.

"Oh," exclaimed Fannie, "Alice is so romantic!" Commend me to a little common sense."

"Not if it is dull and common-place," laughed Alice.

"Ah, yes! that's just like you, Ally. Now, I'll wager my left ear-ring against Harry's pet moustache—which he has cherished so carefully since you admired it—that from the time we came to Genoa, you have been dreaming of brigand chiefs and other nice young men, 'with a pretty considerable propensity to strolling,' as the Yankees say. How delightful to be run away with, and carried off to some tumble-down old castle—I beg your pardon, dilapidated palazzo—by a man in slouched hat and feathers, prettily dressed as Wallace, and handsome enough for the hero of one of Mrs. Ratcliffe's novels."

"Which," asked Harry, teasingly, "the man or the feathers?"

"There, sir, don't interrupt your elders; 'little boys should be seen and not heard,' the old proverb says—Alice must teach it you. Of course, the lover would fall at your feet, vow you must be his, say love made him desperate, and all that—and of course you would forgive

him—return to mamma—be married—and as the fairy tales end—"live happily to the end of your days."

"I bar that last clause," replied her cousin, "for I always did hate it, it sounds——"

"So common place!" exclaimed Fan, twisting her little face into such a comical shape, that the stiff old cavaliers on the walls, must have laughed in spite of themselves.

"Has Alice a desire to enact the heroine?" asked Mrs. Greville, whom the tumult roused from her nap.

"Oh, to be sure," cried Fanny.

"She don't know what she desires," muttered Harry, who had been a little out of humor all day, because Alice smiled on a Russian prince, the night before.

"But *you* do," said Fannie, maliciously, in a stage whisper, that effectually checked the lieutenant's loquacity.

"No, mamma," said Alice, "but I do say that I think a long humdrum courtship of four years is a horrid thing, and then spending an unknown number of years with a man, of whom you know nothing after all, except that he has *seemed* kind, I do not fancy."

"Oh, no," returned Fannie, "jumping out of a four story window would be so much more romantic."

"Not if you fell on the bricks," added Mrs. Greville; "I would advise you to follow the plan of the lady in the farce, and have a 'premeditated load of hay below.'"

"Good Lord, ma'am, of course your lover would catch you."

"Well, you don't seem likely to alter one another's opinion," replied the lady, "so I move we adjourn to bed, for I heard the old clock strike eleven, sometime since."

After a few more words of gay badinage, they rose to seek their respective chambers, but Harry managed to detain Alice after the others had left the room.

"What do you want?" she said, though the gleam in her eye showed that the question was a very useless one. "I want to go to bed—I am so sleepy," and she got up the prettiest yawn imaginable.

"Probably, if the Prince was talking, you would be willing to listen till morning," said he, peevishly.

"Possibly," replied she, with another well affected yawn, "how charmingly he spoke Spanish—Harry, I wish you would learn."

"I'll learn Sanscrit, if you'll only say you love me."

"Lord!" muttered Fannie, who was listening

at the key-hole, "he'll break his jaw if he tries, so she better not say so if she think it."

"But, Harry," said Alice, "I am not certain that I do! I like you very much, but——"

"Confound the buts!" cried Harry, "there's two in a sentence."

"Come to bed, Ally!" shouted Fannie from the hall. Then she rushed through, and sprang into the room, looking so innocent, you'd have sworn she came from the other side of the house. She fairly turned Alice out, but before she went herself, caught Master Harry by the ear, and giving it a most unmerciful pull, exclaimed—

"Oh, you poor little military goose, you newly fledged lieutenant, you're as soft as a chicken with the pip. If I were in your place, I'd find a way to make her say yes in double quick time, but you won't—not you—so I'll be Madam Fate, (though she was an old maid,) and help you."

Fannie stood on her tiptoes, and tried to look very stern when she talked about personifying Fate, but in spite of all she could do she was only four feet eleven, and her dignified expression made Harry laugh, notwithstanding his ill temper.

She flew up the great staircase after Alice, making the old windows echo to her gleesome song-bursts. The spirit of mischief seemed to have taken undisputed possession of her, for after dancing herself out of breath round their monstrous chamber, she sat down on the floor and laughed until the tears ran down her cheeks, that looked like two poppies from such unwonted exertion.

"Just have the goodness to get into bed and spin a romance," was her only reply to Alice's repeated question of "What on earth niled her?" and then she laughed to see how provoked Alice was, and made her laugh too, then the little minx asked her what she laughed at, and shook her because she couldn't tell.

The ghosts moving with stately tread through those gloomy apartments, must have been shocked at the young barbarian's actions, but it was little Miss Fannie cared for dignity, and she would have pulled Queen Bess' spirits ruff without the slightest hesitation, and poured hot water on a whole line of Italian ghosts, with as little mercy as Morgiana exercised toward the forty thieves.

Two nights after, Alice was alone in the house, with the exception of the old porter, for her mother and cousins were at a ball, and the servants had obtained permission to go to some merry-meeting. She had staid at home because

there was a weight on her spirits, which, though she could not define it, cast a shadow over her heart, and she felt that it would be impossible for her to attempt to be gay.

She went up to her own chamber, and taking a book sought to lose her ideal sorrow in the pages of a favorite romance. A couple of hours passed before she was roused from her absorption in the tale. Suddenly the turret clock tolled twelve; she started when the sound fell on her ear, waking echoes far through the stillness, and she could hear the beating of her heart in each stroke. When the tones died away she sat down again, smiling at her own folly, yet with a feeling of nervousness strangely unusual to her.

Again, an unwonted noise disturbed her—it was not the chime of the clock that time, and she pressed her hand against her heart to stay its beatings. She had been reading Anne Ratcliffe's Udolpho, and was just where Emily was wandering through the castle vaults, so she listened once more, and hearing nothing, concluded it was her imagination, which might well become excited. A few moments after there was another sound as of a window being raised—she sprang up—a faint cry died on her lips. Her imagination might be powerful, but it couldn't raise a window—at least one so heavy as any of those in the palace. She listened in mute horror, for she heard heavy steps echoing through the galleries, and once or twice the smothered tone of voices met her ear. She could not move—fear deprived her of all strength, and she was about sinking on the floor, when the grating of the door of her room on its hinges restored her. She looked up—several muffled forms were entering—she cast a glance at the foremost, his features were almost concealed by a slouched hat, but she recognized the countenance of a man whom she had seen near the palazzo the day before.

Her spirit rose in spite of her terror, and she said in a tolerably firm voice, (without stopping to think her favorite heroine would have fainted under the circumstances) "What do you wish?"

"Fear not," he said, in broken English, "we will not harm you, but you must go wid us."

She shrank back, but he came close to her, laid his hand on her shoulder, and motioned his attendants. There were six of them; five powerful men and a masked page. There was a dilapidated mansion—bandits with moustachios, pistols, drooping plumes, and she didn't stop to see what else—beside a page with flesh-colored silk tights, very little calf to his leg, and a blue doublet—all the concomitants to a three volume romance, certainly.

"Fear not," said the brigand chief, "you are as safe as if in de moder's arms." What a pity he should speak such villainous English. "Coom, Anselmo, dake de signora's mandle," he said to the page. The boy approached, and wrapped a shawl round the frightened girl, then turned away—oh, nonromantic page—unworthy accessory to a thrilling romance—to laugh.

Alice gave a shriek, by no means a lady-like one, as the bandit seized her in his arms, and folding the shawl over her head, hurried down the stairs, followed by his attendants.

"For God's sake let me free!" cried the agonized girl. "Take all I possess—gold, jewels—but set me down."

He set her down as a gentleman would, but only for a moment, then he seized her again, and was carrying her through the hall which rang with her shrieks, when the great door suddenly opened, and Harry appeared.

"Save me!" she cried. The chief dropped his burden and ran, still followed by his attendants, page and all, who of course would go where their captain led. Harry stopped him, and drew his sword, but the noble was too quick for him, and vanished without even leaving his card.

"What in God's name does this mean?" exclaimed the lieutenant. But there was no one to answer, for Alice had fainted. He raised her, and was too busy restoring her to think of pursuing the villains.

"Oh, is it you?" she cried, when she came to her senses. "I thought I was lost."

Harry explained that he left the ball before the others, because Fannie hated to have her alone, and whispered a few words that brought the blood in a torrent to her cheek. He knelt at her feet, and said,

"Are you not certain now?"

Alice replied not, but laid her head back on his arm, and two long, blissful hours elapsed ere they roused themselves from that vision of happiness.

I fancy she was certain, for a year afterward they were all safe in their native land, and the slaves on Mrs. Greville's plantation danced in honor of a wedding where Alice wore white, and Harry looked unusually handsome in a new uniform.

"Are you certain?" whispered a merry voice, as they stood alone at one end of the room; "are you certain?" They looked up and saw Fannie. "For God's sake let me go," continued she, mimicing the tones of one in distress. "Take gold—anything—but leave my mother's darling! Say, are you certain?"

They gazed on her for a moment in silent astonishment—the old palace—the midnight assault—the attempted duel—rose before their sight—and then they comprehended all!

Alice became certain of more than one thing, but she will be a grandmother before Fannie has ceased to laugh over her attempted romance, and her own one trial at performing the part of the brigand's page.

HAZLERIDGE PARSONAGE.

BY FLORA FLOWERSVALE.

SPRING has come at last, and we in the country are heartily rejoiced. It is not with us the mere putting on of a new bonnet which marks the changes of the seasons. We are so directly and immediately brought into contact with nature, that all her phases are not merely objects of picturesque interest, but of guidance. When we look over the beautiful landscape just now, with its alternate green and brown and dun, like a huge tessellated pavement, it is with a practical, as well as an artistic eye; for we well understand that the bright green is the wheat greener than ever after its recent very unseasonable snow bath; and that the brown and dun are the fields which are yet waiting for the corn, or into which the oats have been already harrowed and rolled. Without quite the matter-of-fact spirit of the tailor who exclaimed at Niagara "Shears! What a place to sponge a coat!" we have still enough of the prose in us to make our poetry all the more beautiful by the contrast. Plain sense is a capital foil for raptures, and country pictures, to country people, are all the better that they can discern the background of stern use and utility, as well as the higher effects of "grouping," and "light and shade." Look with me for a moment from our verandah. That clump of trees is beautiful—is it not?—and in just the place too for the embellishment of the picture. And those other bushy, grand old giants, there, and there, and there! All very delightful, and as prettily placed as if they had been planted by a landscape gardener. Come with me next July, after hay harvest, when the solstice is at the fiercest, and under that clump I will show you the nicest and coolest pool, and the grateful kine standing there in a bath which Cleopatra might envy. And the shady side of every tree in the grassy land shall have its occupants, lazily flourishing their long and convenient, natural fly-bushes, and chewing the cud of "sweet and bitter fancy," with just enough of the latter for a relish. Please the Fauns, don't let it be wild garlic to spoil our milk!

Each season has its appropriate duties which can neither be neglected nor postponed. Perhaps among them all, those of spring are the most delightful, because they are really the least selfish, and the most conducive to true faith and

confidence in Him who has promised that seed time and harvest shall not fail us. When it comes to harvesting and in-gathering, whether large crops or fruits for immediate gratification, we ought to be thankful, and I hope we are; but there is a lower stratum of mere sensual pleasure in the best of us.

In spring, we derive no immediate pleasure or profit from our work, but look in hope and confidence for the rewards which a kind Father has promised as the results of our obedience. Indeed we are busy. Our city friends, who fancy that country folk have nothing to do but to send butter to market, (*which the cows make*) and eggs, (*which the hens bring into the house in baskets*) have little notion of our activity and diligence. There goes the stage by our gate, and Carrie Phelps kisses her hand "good-bye!" to me. So she is gone! I know it, and it was with her as my ideal heroine I sat down to write you this rambling page or two of country life.

To do this I must go back into the winter; no unpleasant retrospect, let me assure you, whatever city may picture to themselves of winter in the country, as a time of doleful dumps. The out-door view is beautiful—especially when the snowy mantle covers hill-side and plain, dotted with dark skeleton trees, and enlivened with clusters of houses which seem in winter time to draw into close neighborhood, as if to keep warm. Abundance we have of cheerful company and rational enjoyment. Nor are we at any time devoid of subjects for conversation, whatever people may think who can't breakfast till they have seen the daily paper. We are always well enough read up in the city news, the foreign war movements, and the national politics. And then there is our own neighborhood chat, pleasantly postponed once a month by the Ladies' National Magazine, with its literature, art and fashions. Take a country girl's word for it, time never hangs heavy with us, even here, where we have no Julien concerts or Musical Fund Hall. As to public exhibitions generally, if we may judge from the occasional twelve and a half cent specimens, which find their way to our village, we are well rid of them.

Apocryphos—of topics for talk. Our village at this present writing is in a state of feverish, but

most pleasant excitement. Five years ago our old minister died. (Don't laugh, we villagers are much better interested in clergymen, than you cits in the Signori Whiskerini and Signore Taffetine, who form the rallying points of fashionable factions.) He had lived among us so long, and performed the last offices for so many people, that it almost seemed that he must be exempt from death. His family had grown up among us, all excellent sons and daughters, the popular prejudice against ministers' children to the contrary, notwithstanding. The people had built a house for him and his successors in the charge; and he went on from year to year improving it, till there was not a more beautiful place in the village than the parsonage. Everybody felt an unselfish interest in it. It was common property, and so was the venerable tenant. He was always cheerful, and so was his house; for, though at last, all his children had moved away and settled elsewhere, there never was a week that some of them did not visit their birth-place, or some of their children come to see grandfather. He knew, and loved, and welcomed all. They were the guests of the village. We should as soon have thought of blotting Hazleridge from the map of the country, as of regarding the minister's family as belonging to any other place. Caroline Phelps was the minister's niece, and it was through this circumstance that she first saw Hazleridge.

Death is inexorable. The venerable pastor who had folded so many generations, laid down his office and his life together. It was a sad day in Hazleridge, when the words were said over his remains, which no other voice than his had pronounced in that cemetery for half a century. I could scarce feel, as I saw the earth piled up over him, that he was not standing, as it had ever been his wont, with kind respect for the dead, whether pauper or equal, to watch with moistened eyes the last movement of the sexton's spade.

The widow lived on in the house, by invitation of the parish, given not only formally, but in the sound of every voice, and the kind regards of every countenance. She strove to keep up the hospitable and cheerful character of the mansion. The new minister, a young unmarried man, was domiciled with her, so that the house was still the parsonage, in fact, as well as in name. But we could not feel it so. Whenever we called, the visits to the dwelling which used to be so delightful, would be sad in spite of us. The widow's eyes would fill with tears, though she welcomed us with smiles, and strove, good Christian heart, to be resigned. The blank which his departure, who had been the light of

the dwelling had left, was too much for hostess and for guests. And with her own children we soon discovered, that the sorrow of a visit was not much less. They grieved at meeting their mother, and again at separation; and after a few months trial of this mode of living, the widow attempted it no longer, but removed to the house of one of her sons.

The young clergyman of course, did not want the house. It was but a short time closed, however, before a tenant was found on the honorable and pleasant terms of boarding the clergyman. Everybody liked him; but the sentiment of filial affection which his predecessor inspired, so young a man could not hope to awaken. A clergyman is never at his zenith of usefulness before his hair is a little silvered. But Mr. Mortimer always commanded respect. His conduct was unexceptionable and dignified, and though not morose, or insensible to the charms of social intercourse, there was no approach to levity in his conversation, nor, we may add, in his presence. Thus he escaped the folly which too often drives young clergymen into matrimony, as their only security against mischievous gossip. The keenest eye in the village could not detect anything in his conduct or demeanor, on which to found the small talk imputation of an "engagement." He stood in a gentlemanly and dignified attitude to the young of both sexes, and in a deferential, yet commanding position to the old. He "magnified his office," and while he claimed no personal respect, wore still the panoply, and commanded the honor due to an ambassador of heaven.

Thus stood matters up to this very morning; and after this somewhat long, though necessary digression, we may again take up the thread of our story—if it has any thread, which I begin to doubt. Well, this day the town is all astir with the news that the minister is going to take the house himself. It is well understood—for we take care to be well posted in such matters, that he has no mother or sister, or aunt or cousin, who can come to keep house for him. He is certainly going to be married. Who can she be? Will she become ex-officio President of our Ladies' Society, or leave the old lady in possession, who holds the office now by seniority? Will she propose a fancy fair, to aid in painting the old church? Will she invite the sewing circle to the parsonage? Numberless are the questions, and vague the replies. Nobody seems to know anything about her. It can be nobody among us. There is not a girl in the parish who has had the slightest hope of him—though there are a score who would have been too happy

to have secured his good graces. Who can it be?

There is not the slightest doubt of the main fact in the case—that the young gentleman intends to bring hither a female colleague. Two or three of our oldest men, our “wisest, virtuous, discreetest, best,” as Milton hath it, are superintending improvements, restorations and alterations about the house and grounds. These ancients are put to a whimsical torture with questions and cross-questions; but they only shake their heads with proposed sagacity, and refuse with most provoking importance to answer inquiries. They evidently know; and are as evidently well pleased. Who can it be?

But I perceive my pen has run away from the subject. This sketch—scratch—letter—call it what you will, has had hitherto little to do with my heroine, Carrie Phelps. Let me see—where was I? Oh, seeing her off in the stage. You perceive, however, that our attention may be distracted here in the country, as well as *yours* in town. News is news in Hazleridge, and when we have any, we make the most of it.

Carrie Phelps was but a wee thing when she used to come here in her aunt's time; but a few years may make a wonderful difference in a young lady. Indeed it seems to me sometimes that women spring up out of little girls, like an arctic season, with as little interval between childhood and adolescence, as there is between a polar winter and summer. Of course, people could not be supposed to know anything of her as a teacher; but her aunt's recommendation was enough. That she was a connection of the deceased pastor, predisposed everybody in her favor, and the warrant of her welcome was never withdrawn. She proved a most excellent teacher—but, thank fortune, I have been done with school for a *long* time—full eighteen months, so we will let the professional part of her character pass.

For the rest—Carrie was the delight of the Hazleridge society, and everybody's favorite. A prominent position among strangers is a trying position for a young lady. To conduct with proper discretion and tact; neither offending by hauteur, and repelling by coldness on the one hand, nor losing respect by too great lightness or affability on the other, is a difficult mean to observe. I sometimes think that a teacher's vocation is favorable to the solution of this difficult problem. I have been half inclined myself to take a school to learn lessons in gravity, and staid decorum. The schoolmistress has, in her little kingdom, the province of command, and learns self-respect, while she is enforcing obedience. Some foolish girls can learn no-

where, but Caroline Phelps was not one of these.

Our young men became her perfect idolators—all except the Rev. Mr. Mortimer. He walked on, as staid and unmoved, as if she had been his sister. She boarded in the same family, but failed to excite a single glance, or to obtain one smile from his placid face—except such a smile as was no “*fee smile*” to her, but was disseminated over the “*general weal*” of the whole household. (You see I have been reading Shakspeare. Carrie borrowed Mr. Mortimer's copy, and we read parts of it together. I dare say the insensible mortal told her to be sure and not turn down the leaves!)

Carrie was with us nearly a year. She came for the summer term, but pleased so well that the directors did the unusual thing to ask her to take charge of a winter school. They even invited her to return and teach the summer again, but she declined. It was too provoking! I am sure she has no friends anywhere who love her half as well, and as for me, I loved her like a sister. If she was only here now, we might learn something of what is doing at the parsonage, and what it looks like, and what things promise. Those fussy old men, one can get nothing out of them. And as to joking Mr. Mortimer, or asking him any thing which he don't tell of his own accord—we should as soon think of talking nonsense to the statue of General Washington.

Revenons a nos moutons—not that Carrie is a sheep, you know, but one must quote French in these days of boarding-school proficiency. I will adhere to my story, and not mention Mr. Mortimer again. All the young men, as I told you, were smitten with Caroline Phelps. The young women might have been jealous and spiteful, if Carrie had not been as decorous and unaffected through the whole of it, that she soon restored the men to their senses, and prevented them making themselves or herself appear ridiculous. She had the most perfect knack at generalizing what was intended for a particular attention, and diffusing what was meant as an offering to herself, over a whole party. Let me tell you that this scattering the rays of the men's admiration, and preventing their convergence on one point, prevented several disastrous conflagrations here last winter.

We are all quite of the opinion that Carrie was affianced before she came here; and that thus armed, she was proof against all Hazleridge gallantry. It was not merely matter of course attentions that she received—but we happen to know that the best and most eligible

party here made her distinct proposals, which she politely, but positively declined. There is no coquetry in Carrie. She never laid herself out to attract admiration, but rather discouraged it. The man who made advances to her, did it entirely of his own notion, and has no one to blame but himself in his disappointment. Still we are all sorry for poor George —. He had quite set his heart on her. He made his approaches in the siege which he laid to her hand in the most orthodox and improved manner. All the skilful skirmishing of small attentions, which she could not receive without seeming to approve, or refuse without being impolite, were paid to her. Gradually and handsomely he closed his

lines, and drew nearer and nearer to the attack. All, up to the last moment was uncertainty; though all the Hazleridge world up to last evening, thought it must be a match. He proposed—and was rejected. I confess I share the general surprise.

P. S. The quiet, reserved, lady-like, elegant, dear, delightful, accomplished little puss:—The mysterious, solemn, excellent, dignified, Rev. Mr. Mortimer:—Don't you think—dare you believe—shall I tell you, Mr. Peterson? Carrie Phelps that is, Mortimer that is to be, is the future mistress of Hazlewood Parsonage.

ERNESTINE GRAY.

BY REV. H. HASTINGS WELD.

"I do believe," said a gentleman to his wife, "that if a perfect human character ever existed, it is that of your placid and cheerful, yet sad-looking friend. She seems too good for earth—so practical and yet ethereal; so full of common sense, usefulness and compassion, and yet herself above all common desires and disappointments."

"Hers is a history. Shall I relate it?"

"Pray do so. I only wonder that you have not given me the narrative before."

"Men are always disposed to disparage maiden ladies; and I never felt like exposing Ernestine Gray's touching character to even the shadow of a smile. It is one of my sacred themes; fit only for a guest hour like this, when the shadow of her almost saintly presence has disposed the mind to contemplate the higher beauties of the Christian character; the Truth and Love which in their purity make us realize the heavenly influence of a Christian life."

The character which you so much admired, and so justly, is one that has been perfected through suffering. What I am about to tell you is not her confession, formally made to me in an hour of confidence; for Ernestine Gray is not one of those who are addicted to obtruding their private griefs upon their friends, and challenging admiration of their martyrdom. Nor does she regard herself as at all notable or remarkable. In her quiet humility, she would be very much surprised that I can find patience to recount, or that you can be interested in hearing the events of her life. In the course of her pilgrimage we may see only suffering; but in each event she discerns the goodness of God in permitting her to be useful to her kind, and schooling her by the discipline of sorrow, to calmness of spirit and strength of religious character. What I know of her I have learned chiefly of others; and her accidental allusions to herself have only enabled me to correct and connect the narrative.

I first met with her a few years since, during the prevalence of a disease among children, which was so severe as almost to take the character of an epidemic. The wealthy could remove their children from the influence of the infection, or disarm disease of a portion of its

terrors by the provision of remedies and the comforts of attendance and suitable nourishment and palliatives. But the poor, deprived of all luxuries, and in many cases of absolute necessities, shut up in close courts and lanes, and debarred that first requisite to health, wholesome air, perished in great numbers. The ladies, in organized societies, or as the representatives of churches, and also in their own continual capacity as the representatives of humanity, made great efforts to stay the malady and relieve the distressed.

Foremost among them was Ernestine Gray—foremost but unobtrusive. Many women had the safety of their own children to consult, and could not compromise it by actual contact with the disease. Many others, generous, but faint-hearted, were ready to give without stint, but feared to place themselves within the reach of the dreaded miasma, or were positively interdicted by friends from so doing. Almoners to distribute aid were more needed than alms-givers to furnish it. Ernestine had none of these clogs upon her benevolence which I have spoken of; and she had no fears. Wherever the cry of distress appealed to her, she answered it with calm and unconscious courage and self-denial—never with the reckless fanaticism of mere impulse. She guarded her own life, and husbanded her own strength, and she would not tempt Providence by heedless and unnecessary exposure, or abridge her own usefulness by the prostration of her energies. I had never heard of her before. Her name is never prominent. She does not assume directed, but silently co-operates in whatever good, requiring aid, is undertaken by any one else; and always diligently pursues her own course in the retired paths of mercy, where one gentle woman can put a thousand ills to flight.

One day I met Ernestine in the street, and as our ways lay together, we busily compared notes of what we had seen, and who needed assistance. This was before I became a selfish wife, and while I yet had opportunity to give to the poor the care and love which one's household comes in time to monopolize. We were stopped by a child who begged us with honest, natural tears, "Oh, good ladies, *do* come for father is dying!" Following the little messenger up a court we

were ushered into a scene, the memory of which will never leave me. On a miserable dusty bed lay a man in his last throes, his heavy breathing convulsing his whole frame. The damps of death were on his brow. Several women, his poor neighbors, were gathered round, looking with troubled curiosity at this "last scene of all." The dying man, as we drew near, raised himself upon his elbow—a flash of light passed over his vision, his corrugated features relaxed into a faint smile of welcome; his lips moved as if to speak, and he sank on his pillow to rise no more.

Ernestine had pressed up to the bedside, and stood just before me, fixedly looking at the dead. She even took one cold hand in hers, and as she did so, I saw her frame shake with powerful emotion. She crossed his arms upon his breast, pressed down his eyelids, and busied herself for a moment in composing his matted hair. When she turned I saw in her features the traces of a fearful struggle—but though her eyes swam in tears, not a cry, not a word escaped her lips. She raised the child, who had thrown herself weeping upon the foot of the bed, and said, "Was this your father?" The child replied by throwing herself upon the lifeless body; and it required no little exertion of strength to disengage her from that fearful embrace. "Come with me," said Ernestine to the little forsaken one; but the only reply was to rush back to the bedside and cling with frantic energy to the cold form of him who had been her last, her only friend. "Go with the lady," said one of the women, wiping the child's eyes with her apron, and adjusting as well as she could her wreck of a bonnet; "go with the lady, and when all is ready for the burying you shall come back again." The little one looked up, as if scarce understanding what was said, but suffered herself to be persuaded. When we reached the street Ernestine beckoned to a cab, and not wishing to intrude myself upon her purposes, whatever they might be, I pursued my way home alone, heart weary at the woe in the world, of which I had just seen this new instance.

Ernestine never recalled the events of that day again to me, though we met often during that sad summer, and have since kept up a constant intercourse. But she had acquired such a strange interest in my eyes, that the curiosity with which I traced her history must be pardonable. I learned that at an early age she lost her father, and upon Ernestine fell the double charge of a helpless mother and an infant sister. It was not that poverty compelled this labor; but there are attentions which wealth cannot purchase, and requirements and attentions which affection only

can supply. Ernestine was remarkably capable of fulfilling these demands—a very little woman, wise beyond her years; but the burthen caused a premature development of her character, and imprinted upon her youthful face the stamp of care and solicitude. What might have been budding beauty under happier auspices, was changed to a look of anxiety which bespoke powers overtasked. To guide the waywardness of infancy is a task even for the old and experienced; the child Ernestine was obliged to control her sister six years younger. And she was required moreover to rule with such discretion that the cunning perseverance of little Mary would not defeat her by appeals to a nerveless sufferer, for whom the physician enjoined repose. Thus early did Ernestine Gray learn self-sacrifice.

Her mother's death came upon her as a great and oppressive affliction; but she learned afterward to feel that it was a deliverance and a mercy to the sufferer, and a relief to her children. The early years of Ernestine could not long have endured the double task; and mind, or body, or both, must have sunk beneath it. In such a school was she early trained to endure the trials of life; and to feel that "no one liveth to himself."

From eighteen years of age, when she wept over her mother's grave to four or five and twenty, were the sunny days of Ernestine Gray. She became, after the death of her parents, the light of the household of her mother's sister; and at once perfected her own education, and brought forward her younger cousins and her sister. Labor is pleasure when we labor for those we love; and in constant occupation is the secret of enjoyment as well as of usefulness. To all the house Ernestine was dear, and by all beloved; but the love which existed between her and her charge was passing beautiful. The gentle sway of the elder sister—not imperious from the love of power, but firm in the depth of affection, and the consciousness of well-earned right, never failed to control Mary, wayward as she was. The very contrast in their characters made their sisterly union more delightful. Mary was heedless, happy, impulsive—and her merry laugh and sunny face arrested you at a glance, and bound you afterward. You could not but love the frolicsome, innocent heart, which opened to you as if sorrow had never entered into the world, and deceit and evil were not known in it. Frequently Mary Gray came under grave reproof; but the very lips which chid her transgressions, were oftenest suddenly turned away to conceal a smile.

Mary was her uncle's favorite, Ernestine was

his admiration. He could not, however, have found a nearer way to the unselfish heart of Ernestine Gray, than in his kindness to Mary. When, therefore, Mary was chosen to accompany her cousins and their father on a long summer tour, Ernestine smiled a pleased acquiescence in his remark, that he would "leave the two old ladies at home." Mrs. Warner had positively declined to accompany the party; and as it was necessary that some one should remain at home with her, the choice of course fell upon the gentle-hearted girl who appeared to have no higher pleasure in life than consulting the wishes of her friends.

It was a dull house during the many weeks that the family were absent. Ernestine began to acknowledge weariness, almost for the first time in her life. It was not the weariness of application, but the want of employment. Chance threw in her way a new friend; or rather the politeness of one who had long been an occasional visitor at the house, seemed to her the more grateful that, when so little remained to attract him, his visits were increased rather than diminished in number. Old ladies are keen-eyed, and Mrs. Warner looked on and smiled at Ernestine's innocent self-deception. There was no need of frowns certainly, for the frequent guest was in every way worthy of Ernestine's affection, if he should succeed in winning it.

Herbert gained her confidence. And the evidence of this was that she talked unreservedly and warmly to him, not of herself, but of those she dearly loved. Her kind aunt and uncle, her cousins, and, above all, her own dear sister, were the themes on which she delighted to dwell. She read to him portions of her sister's letters; and it was from all this that he learned to divine how deep a well of affection her outward calmness concealed. Ernestine seemed then, as she now does, passionless and almost cold. It was only her intimates, her own family circle who knew what a wealth of love was hid in her placid breast. And Herbert first found favor in her eyes, that he listened with such pleased attention to her praises of her sister. She thought it was interest in the absent which lighted up his face, as she talked to him. She did not suspect that all other human beings were absent from his thought as well as sight as he listened to her.

Old ladies, we have said, are keen-sighted. Mrs. Warner forgot the loneliness of the house, in her amusement at the little drama which was acting under her eyes. She could have told Ernestine more than she knew or suspected of the secrets of her own heart; but she was discreet and silent, and diverted herself with the thought

how much all would be amazed when they returned, to find that even Ernestine was not insensible—and that she also, the self-sacrificing, had discovered that another might live for her, and be beloved for it. Ernestine did not yet know her own heart. It was still to be revealed to her. Herbert was so far from exacting any thing, that he did not even commit himself. They were a couple of very blind lovers.

In due time the family returned; not a day too soon, as Mrs. Warner declared, "for nobody could tell what would have happened in their longer absence." Ernestine blushed, as the old lady went on to dilate upon the frequency of Herbert's visits. She had never felt her face crimson before, at any such illusion. Perhaps she began to suspect the true state of the case. Punctual as night fall, Herbert was at the house.

Returned travellers monopolize conversation. It is their right. And Mary Gray was voluble in her descriptions of what she had seen, and animated in her account of what she had enjoyed. Ernestine more than shared her pleasure, and as she looked on this vision of beauty, she was more than pleased that Herbert was quite wrapt in it. "Beautiful!" he said to her in an undertone; and Ernestine's face glowed with pleasure. Was not Mary her own creature, so far as the human being can mould another? How their hearts knit, as hand in hand they knelt at their bedside that night, to thank the Good Being who had once more restored them to each other!

Herbert's benevolent attachment to the deserted house did not cease when it became once more inhabited. If possible his assiduous attention was increased. Aunt Warner who saw a clear case before the return of her family, saw less clearly now. And Ernestine?—could that pang have been jealousy—jealousy of her own sister? The anxious look came in a heavier cloud upon her brow again; but she wrestled with her feelings and was still. What she had not suspected till too late in herself, she read plainly in the transparent bosom of her sister.

Aunt Warner was sitting alone in the twilight. She heard a light footstep, and called "Ernestine!" The niece came and sat down by her side. "I have a surprise for you. Herbert has obtained the permission of your sister formally to ask our consent to his marriage with her." The matron felt the hand of Ernestine grow cold in hers—and then a glow of heat came to the very finger ends. Her niece said, in a calm voice, "He is worthy of her."

"Are you a perfect stoic?" asked her aunt after a pause. "How can you conceal your own thoughts and disappointments?"

"I hope, my dear aunt, that I hide nothing which it would benefit others to disclose."

"Ernestine, you are more than human——"

"Less, oh, much less, a weak, silly child!"

Ernestine bowed her head upon Mrs. Warner's neck, and her aunt felt the scalding tears falling into her bosom. The happy voices of Mary and her cousins, and the deep, manly tones of Herbert were heard as they approached. Two figures glided out of the room as they entered. Lights were brought, and the happy laugh resounded where a moment before the heart which would not break, silently struggled, and yielded to the requirements of a high sense of duty.

The victory over self was perfect in Ernestine. Her light-hearted sister did not dream, while kind advice and direction and assistance were continually given, at how great a price to another she had acquired her dreams of joy. Ernestine, as was her wont, was the soul of all the preparations. Even Herbert, who had at first some twinges of conscience, when he saw the unconstrained and uncomplaining manner in which the elder sister fulfilled what she deemed her mission, was put completely at ease. Only Mrs. Warner knew the struggles of that tried heart, and loved her niece more than ever. Herbert felt almost angry at her insensibility, rejoiced at his own escape, and was nearly ready to reproach Ernestine with having kindled in him an affection which she did not reciprocate. What an artful casuist is an inconstant heart!

Herbert and Mary were married. The sister showed no more emotion than was natural—less outwardly than her aunt. Only farce writers make marriages scenes of unmixed happiness, as if all our life ties could be disturbed, and we unmoved. To be sure, the future is full of hope—but brief was the dream of happiness for Mary. A short year scarcely passed before the bride was consigned to the tomb; but Ernestine Gray, as she wept over the dead, had still a consolation which no one knew, save herself. Mary died, as she had lived, her dear sister. Not a suspicion of THE SECRET clouded her brief day, or dimmed the hour in which she surrendered to her God the youthful spirit which a sister's care had trained to meet that sure event—the end of all the living.

And now, you are ready to say, Ernestine's cup was full—her desolate existence could know no further sorrow. She saw her aunt, a second mother, laid in the grave—but she was gathered into the garner as a shock fully ripe. Death brings not an abiding grief to those who sorrow not without hope. It is a transient separation—not an everlasting farewell.

Calmly Ernestine rose above these sorrows. She bowed to the blast, and when it was overpast, rose again, gentle and pliant, but having within herself the elements of strength—for her trust was in One whose arm is mighty, and whose mercy sure. The memory of the departed was sacred to her, and she could heartily give thanks for those departed this life in the true faith and fear. On Herbert—stricken and almost inconsolable in his despair, she could look with the tenderest pity. He was dear to her, as one whose life had been united to her sister. The unhappy past had faded from her thoughts in the sacredness of the more recent affliction, in which, with him she had a common lot. She softened his grief with gentle words of holy consolation. And again Herbert discerned in her heart its wealth of pure affection. Again he found that she was not cold and insensible. The living Mary had once taught him this; the memory of the dead caused the lesson to be repeated.

Herbert could not understand the noble nature of Ernestine. His love for her gentle spirit to which her brilliant sister had done unconscious and innocent wrong, returned with new strength. It seemed to him that he had loved them both as one; that Mary had been dear to him for the sake of Ernestine; and that sorrow for the dead now made the living sister more dear. He would sit for hours, recalling the every word and gesture and thought of the departed; and Ernestine gave way with the sweet sadness of affection to such communion with him. Herbert was to her a dear brother, and the love with which she regarded him was pure and holy as the relation in which he seemed to stand to her—the living representative of the sainted dead.

For many months this innocent dream lasted. But Ernestine had learned to distrust her own heart. And what was sadder far—for the grieved spirit mourns to find its hopes disappointed—she was forced to distrust Herbert. She saw to what they were tending; and to discern her duty was to resolve to do it. Ernestine calmly pointed out to him the danger in which they stood.

Herbert said, "You have saved me the awkwardness of an explanation. Why should you describe that as a danger—a result to be feared and dreaded—which to me seems our only hope of happiness, our plain course of duty—if duty consist in preserving our peace and usefulness?"

Ernestine fixed upon him a gaze of grieved astonishment. Then all the woman in her came to her aid; her bruised spirit rebelled against its oppressor. Herbert needed no interpreter of the glance from that sternly beautiful face; and

when he dared to look up, she was gone from him, and forever.

“Well, upon my word,” said the gentleman, looking at his watch, as his wife’s voice ceased, “you have made me forget my club. You should be a Sultan’s bride, for nothing in the Thousand and One Nights is half so interesting. Pray, where did you learn to improvise, little one, and

why have you concealed your accomplishment so long?”

“No raillery, sir, or you will break your faith.”

“I am dumb. But the girl who comes here with Miss Gray, is she her sister’s child?”

“No, she is Herbert’s, the daughter of another wife, for Mary died childless. She is the orphan, whom I saw Ernestine Gray lead from her father’s death bed.”

MISS SALLY SLICER'S SOLILOQUY.

BY ALICE BOND.

WELL, I declare, I never get so tired any other day in the week as I do Sunday; but now I have eat supper and washed and put away the tea-things and I'll sit down and rest a few minutes.

I shouldn't think the people of Centreville would tolerate such a minister as Mr. Culver any longer; he does preach such dull, prosy sermons, with no striking thoughts clothed in beautiful language, no flight of fancy, no highly wrought sentences. He only exhorts his hearers to be good and useful, warns them of the punishment that is sure to follow sin, and explains some few passages of Scripture. So old fashioned! One can't be religious if they would.

I think we need some one here that is talented; some young clergyman that is unmarried. A man without any family would have so much more time to prepare his sermons, and visit the members of his church. Poor Mr. Culver! I never did see such an inattentive audience as his was to-day. But then it was ridiculous for Deacon Jones to go to sleep right in meeting time, sitting bolt-upright in his long pew, with his mouth wide open, and snoring loud enough to disturb the whole congregation; I did feel sorry for old Mrs. Jones when she jogged his elbow and he gave such a start, knocking her parasol and hymn-book down to the floor. And then to think Ellen Mason should giggle so. I know I blushed every time I looked at her, sitting there, looking as innocent as a kitten, with the lining to her dress cut out so low in the neck. Thinks her shoulders are white, I suppose. The shameless creature! If I could get hold of her, I would give her one good shaking, I know. I don't like Mrs. Green's new spring bonnet at all. So dashing for a woman of her age; her children haven't any manners, no kind of bringing up. Everybody could see that when that ugly little brat Sammy screamed out in the porch, "there goes old Sally Slicer," his mother boxed his ears soundly, but not half so much as he deserved, and one of those proud Misses Hall smiled, pretending however that she tried to suppress it. I do think it's real wicked for those girls to stand and talk and laugh with the gentlemen in the porch, and then go into church and look right straight at the minister and their hymn-books all the time so very seriously. I believe they are arrant hypocrites. But

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it's getting dusk, and I'll go into the parlor and watch by the west window to see who goes by.

That snow-ball bush is right in the way now it's "leaved out," but I'll have it cut down next week. There come the Miss Meddlers; going to Methodist meeting; think somebody will offer to go home with them, I suppose. All they go to meeting for is to get a beau, Methodist indeed! Time was, when all the Methodist women were dressed as plainly as the Quakers; but now, nobody wears so many feathers, and chains, and flounces, and furbelows, as the Miss Meddlers. There they go swinging and twisting along down the street. I wonder who that is; it must be Dr. Hall going to see Mary Sprague. He goes every Sunday night, and once or twice in the middle of the week besides, but "I don't think it's any credit to either of them."

That must be Enoch Treadwell, going to see Polly Hill. The old fool! They say he has killed two wives, and I know Polly won't have anything to say to him. What a life that old maid must lead, she is always scrubbing; everything in her house must be clean and white as a snow-drift. Folks say she is half crazy, and I believe it, for whenever there is a hard thunder-shower Polly can be heard singing away happy as a bird.

Mrs. Green said Enoch went there last Sunday night, and Polly locked the doors so that he couldn't come in and stayed in the chambers. I guess she has done so again to-night. There sure enough goes Enoch in at the gate. He is knocking at the south door. No one comes to open it. Now he has gone round to the west door. Here he comes back again and is looking in at the window. Polly is raising the chamber window. I wonder what for? She is holding a tin pail. Down goes a whole bucket of water right on to Enoch's head. Ha! ha! ha! the old fellow must be thoroughly drenched. There he goes off, muttering to himself, and I think he will never trouble Polly again. Here comes a wagon. It's George Harris and Susan White; he is leaning over toward her dreadful lovingly, with his arm laid across the back of the wagon seat. I suppose he thinks Kate Parsons will see them go by. He intends that she shall hear him at any rate. Mercy! you might hear him shout to his horse "go along," and hear the crack of his whip

anywhere in Centreville. There Betsey Payne has put a light in the parlor again. She sets a candle in every night to make folks think some one is there. But I have watched ten Sunday nights in succession, and haven't seen even the shadow of a gentleman knock at the hall door. The deceitful creature! Well, I am tired. I should like to see how long Betsey Payne will keep the candle burning in the parlor, and who goes home with the Miss Meddlers, and how long Dr. Hall stays at Mr. Sprague's, but I guess I

will not wait to see, for I'm tired and my eyes ache.

And Miss Sally groped her way from the parlor to the kitchen, lit the candle that had been placed in readiness, and stalked up the stairs to her chamber. After carefully closing the door she loosened her teeth, rattled them around in her mouth, took them out and placed them on the table, washed the color from her face, and—extinguished the candle.

DR. WETHERGREEN'S PRACTICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SUSY L——'S DIARY."

CHAPTER I.

"BIRDY, thou darling!" He, that is, young Dr. Joseph Wethergreen, held the stranger-bird in both hands to his cheek. "And how didst know, darling birdy—what put it into thy little head—that my heart was aching for some live thing?"

He held the bird off a little from him now, looking steadily into her eyes, as he talked to her. "You knew where to come, didn't you, darling?—darling!"

The bird, a pretty Canary, had just flown, first to the young doctor's window-sill; and, then, upon his calling her tenderly and holding out his hand to her, holding it a little nearer, and a little nearer, she came and lit upon his fore-finger and clung to it. Soon as he talked to her, with his face near her; with his eyes on hers, telling her things and asking her questions; she began tipping her head one way and another, as if she were pleasantly coquetting; she picking at the ring he wore on his little finger, picked at it so smartly, so pertinaciously, twisting the plate—underneath which the tinniest lock of very light hair lay curling—or twisting her bill, rather, in trying to twist the plate, and almost coming off her feet, in tugging and twisting, that the young doctor laughed aloud and merrily, calling her "a jealous thing!"

But he told her to "never mind; 'twas all over now. Anna Rogers was now nothing to him, or he to Anna Rogers. Because he was poor, birdy. Did birdy know what that meant, being poor?"

Birdy made a lively, chirping sound, as if she meant—"Yes; yes, she had heard about it; but didn't mind it."

"Well," the young doctor told her, "he was poor. Poorer than the mice that came by night, and sometimes by day—for it was very still there in his room most of the time," he told birdy—"to his closet, which birdy saw there; and that found, when there was neither crust nor bone, the backs of his books to gnaw. And Anna Rogers was rich. Richer than any Jewess, didn't you know it, birdy?" with his eyes steadily on the bird's, stroking her feathers and speaking cheerfully.

It was a year, just a year that day—and he

repeated the thought after it came to him, aloud to birdy; it was just a year that day since old Dr. Rogers, of Roxbury, Dean of the J—— street Medical College in Boston, where he (Joseph Wethergreen, that is) was in a few more days to graduate, told him that Anna was rich.

"Why, young man," spitting the words out of his mouth, as he walked the floor with his head turned a little toward the pale candidate; "she's more money, or will have when I have done with it, than any girl in Roxbury! She could marry the president or any of the faculty to-morrow, if they hadn't wives already! That she could, sir; she's—a—match—for—any—man."

He drew the last words out with slow sententiousness; managing in that way, and in the sneering tones and features, to express a quantity of the loftiest contempt ever yet visited upon the head of any gentlemanly, scholarly candidate whatever. The young doctor went through the reminiscence half to himself, half aloud to the bird, adding with a cheerful face and voice—"Didn't he, birdy?"

Birdy chirped, and, in an airy way, lifted her wings a little, evidently meaning "Yes, but then don't mind him. He's a stupid thing. He thinks gold made him; but it didn't, did it? Maybe he'll know better some day. If he don't, more's the pity for him. But never mind him. Never mind his rich daughter. I'll pick and twist her ring some more, gold and all."

She tugged at the ring again, and almost went tail over head, pulling and twisting. Then she stood upright, wiping her bill clear of the whole matter and seeing to her feathers.

Now, it was true—Dr. Joseph told birdy it was—that, in the year that had dragged itself along, some way, he hardly knew how, since old Dr. Rogers explained to him how rich Anna was, how she could marry any one, and so was not for him, he had not once before that evening spoken Anna's name nor heard it spoken. He had crossed over to the other side of the street and then turned back home, not more than two weeks ago, either, one day when he was on his way to the baker's for his loaf, because he saw young Murdock, son of Professor Murdock, of J—— street college, before him; that he need not meet him and hear him say in his vaulting way, "You!

Wethergreen! you remember Anna Rogers! of course you do! of course you have reason! She's going to be married, old boy!"

"Eh?" said birdy, tipping her head, and with a voice that the young doctor already loved.

"Yes, birdy," he said; and his busy thoughts, some of which he spoke aloud to birdy, went back and forth, between the past and the present. He was on his way after his loaf, he repeated to birdy, two slices of which loaf, together with the bowl of coffee that his landlady's little daughter regularly brought in to him, morning and evening, was to constitute his supper. He turned, and let his loaf go, when he saw young Murdock on the pavement before him. He hurried back to his room, (the room where they were then, he told birdy, seeing that she tipped her head and looked into his face; the room which was at once office, dining-room and dormitory.) He turned the key of his door, that young Murdock might not, by any chance, come to him there, to quiz him about this business, and to ask him with fixed gaze, what he would give to see Anna Rogers.

"But now," once more speaking aloud, "let him come. With birdy on my finger, I can be the first to cry—'Do you know how Anna Rogers is?—my old flame, you know? Is she married, I wonder?'"

He did not know whether she was married. He had carefully kept his eyes away from the marriage lists of all the papers. While he was thinking about this, he turned the evening paper over—he was reading it when birdy came in; he looked over the marriages; and by a curious coincidence saw this—"On Wednesday, A. M., August 28th, at the summer residence of the bride's father, Anna Matilda Rogers, only child of Professor Rogers, M. D., Dean of J— street Medical College, to Charles James Murdock, only son of Dr. Murdock, Professor of Materia Medica of the same Institution. The bridal pair, with the father of the bride, sailed the same day, we understand, for Europe. Success go with them."

"Yes; the same young Murdock I was telling you about, just now, birdy. He I came across when I was going after my loaf. I went without my supper on his account, birdy."

"Eh?" whispered the bird, as if she were thinking "that's queer! that's a queer thing for you to do."

"Yes, birdy; queer, wasn't it? And his head isn't bigger than that," showing birdy his loosely closed hand. "His brains are all lead; only there is a little chaff somewhere in the packing. Sometimes that flies a little; and then he's a little

lively, birdy; in a way though as if his head were dizzy."

Birdy chirped gaily; and even warbled a little.

"Where did you come from, birdy?" setting his hand up before his face, to talk in a regular way to the bird.

"Eh?" said birdy, as if she did not understand.

"Where did you come from, darling? where is your old home?"

"Eh?" she said again, stepping gaily along his finger, with a manner as if she meant "I shan't tell you."

And then she warbled a full, prolonged strain, with her pretty head lifted, and her delicate throat fluttering.

"You beauty!—you shall have some supper, that you shall. Sit here by me on the table; there, that's a pretty one. Sit here, and we will look our money over to see how much we've got between us. Then we shall know what we can do."

He opened his pocket-book—a huge one, given to him by his good old grandfather the day he left home to come and settle at M—. A huge pocket-book it was, an old one; he remembered seeing it when he was a boy, well rounded out with bank notes in part, but mostly with notes of demand, in his grandfather's hands. He used to come up close, in those days, and stand on tip-toe, that he might know better what was in it. Now, in those days, he looked into it sitting quite at his ease. There was nothing to hinder him. There was almost always a little "change" in one department; in the others were sometimes scraps of memoranda, and the like; but never anything any better. So that gradually the habit had come upon him of beginning at once to whistle softly or hum softly, and in rather a sad way—"The harp that once in Tara Halls"—whenever he took the huge, dark, empty thing into his hands.

"See, birdy!" he said, now showing the little one that stood there before him, watching him, how large and empty it was, and how many apartments it had; "see! I call it Tara's Hall; and my heart grows quite sick sometimes, what with the empty pocket-book—when I've been here so long, toying, birdy—and with the harp of the song hanging as mute on Tara's walls, as if the soul of music and of everything beautiful and hopeful were dead, birdy. Isn't it too bad?"

"Eh?" settling her wings. "Eh?" It was a lively sound, albeit, very touching. It had comfort in it some way for the young doctor, who began now with brightened face to pick out the bits of money, making up their amount aloud to birdy.

"Yes, you know what to say to one, beauty! Twenty-five cents, birdy, for pulling the Irishman's snag of a tooth. Old Dr. Gravesend sent him round—because he thought the poor rascal could have no money to pay, birdy; that's why old Dr. Gravesend sent him. Twenty-eight, thirty-seven, sixty-two; sixty-two cents. That's all. That's every cent you and I have got in the world, birdy."

"Eh?" chirped the bird, with an air so unconcerned that it did the young doctor good to see it.

"Yes, birdy; every cent," exchanging his dressing-gown for a coat. "Take good care of things, birdy; I'm going out."

"Eh," meaning "yes," this time. The young doctor knew it by her looks. He had closed the window upon birdy's entrance. He looked round now to see if all was right; tried the fire-board, whether it had any little openings chimney-ward, nodded his head, said "Good-bye" to birdy, and was gone; gone with springing steps, to buy a loaf for himself, some seed and a drinking cup for birdy, together with a half dozen candles for both himself and birdy.

Birdy didn't care about them, though, contented little thing! On the contrary, when Dr. Joseph returned, she was in a corner of the room behind a folio, with her head tucked close under her wing; tucked so close that he could hardly believe she had any head, and fell to asking her about it, and to telling her that he wanted to see her eyes once more; and that, especially, he wanted to know, for a certainty, whether she had any head.

Birdy wouldn't wake. Perhaps she waked far enough to think to herself in her contented way, "No use in it. It's bed-time; I'll attend to him, with all my heart, in the morning." Dr. Joseph felt as if she had some such thought when she nestled a little at his speaking to her, only to tuck her head farther, and shut her wings closer than they were shut before.

So he laid the paper of seed on a book-shelf, cleared the books and manuscript away from one side of his table, and putting the bell down close to the floor, rang for his coffee. When it came, he sat with his eyes on the corner where birdy nestled—fast asleep by this time, he had no doubt—and made his simple meal in peace.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN Dr. Joseph first came to Manchester, he wrote often to "the old folks at home," letters filled with hope and courage, and cheery messages for the old and the young. Of late he had

put it over, whenever he could, as a burden that oppressed him, if he took it up. And when he did write, he had little to say of the present, much of "by-and-bye." By-and-bye it would be so and so; by-and-bye thus and thus; and then!—

For he had felt cheerless and worn, nearly all of the time of late; cheerless, with no heavy sorrow near him, or pending; worn, with no work for his hands or his feet to do; both cheerless and worn of waiting—waiting—through the long morning, through the heavy noon-day, through the slow gathering twilight and the evening; waiting while fever tossed its restless arms in many chambers near; so near that he could see the lights shining through the nights, night after night; and while cholera infantum and the whole troop of summer complaints for children, sent their low murmurs or their sharp cries through the open windows, by day and by night; while the hearse went back and forth, back and forth; and, beyond this, while old Dr. Gravesend and Dr. Coffin, his neighbors both of them, had so much to do that they flew one way and another; that they pulled off their *robes de chambre* in the halls, in the doors, sometimes; threw them to their wives, receiving from them their coats instead, to put on while they were on the way to their carriages; and hurried in entering their carriages and in leaving them, so that, whew! they hardly knew their heads from their feet; hardly knew whether they gave their patients camphor or nux vomica, ipecac or arsenic. They had more than they could do. They said so, whenever there was a chance, in the pale, young doctor's hearing. It did them so much good to say it in *his* hearing! to let *him* see the hurry they kept up! They laughed more, said more jocular things, all day, thinking of it; thinking how he would go to his still room and sit and think of it, growing paler and sadder, as he thought.

And he did go back and think of it, and brood over it; and, in that time, he was the paler and the sadder for it. Then he cast it off from him; and was, as it were, inspired by it. He laid hold of his books and said, with the color coming back to his face and the light to his eyes—"I'll work! By-and-bye, by-and-bye, they will see! They will be old men, by-and-bye; and in need that the young should wait for them and stay their steps. They'll come to this while I am yet in my prime, God blessing me; and then I'll wait for them; I'll attend to them; I'll do all I can for them, so help me God! If He will help me, no man old and past his work, or young and looking in vain for his work, shall feel that I make it the

worse for him. Now I can wait, I thank them! and study, I thank them! and make ready for any time."

The next morning after birdy came to live with him, after he and birdy had taken their breakfast—at the same time and the same table—he sat cheerfully down to answer letters from home, and letters from his cousin, Nathan Ambrose; once, his idlest of all school and playmates, now one of the "fast" men of California. He took the letters to which he would reply, out of his drawer, and read the one from home to himself with thoughtful features. Horace's he read aloud to birdy, birdy chirping and warbling all the time.

"I'm on the high road to fortune, if you know where that is," wrote Ambrose. "I make money, now that I have so much to work with, and experience, about as fast as I have a mind to. But it is often, in a deuce of a way. You'd come to your feet, if you knew how, white-faced, slender things as you are, you'd come to your feet, (as I've seen you more than once in my day, when I was bullying poor, little, patched-up, snub-nosed Horace Grennell, who never had a handkerchief of his own to wipe the tears he was always letting fall, and—*par parenthesis sub parenthesis*—if I use my French or Latin, whichever it is, right; I picked it up, you know, and it wasn't labeled—I wonder where poor Horace is now;) you'd go straight to the place where you keep my letters, and the lumps of gold and quartz I sent you and you'd bring them on, looking mighty sober and sorry. You'd burn the letters, watching them still with sober eyes until their ashes disappeared. You'd throw the lumps of quartz and gold in next—taking care to handle the lumps by the quartz; taking care not to touch the gold, lest it should defile you too. Then, while you watched them, you'd fall to ruminating; to settling it in your mind whether gold is an unmitigated blessing or an unmitigated curse; coming at last to the conclusion, perhaps, that it is not an unmitigated anything, that it is to yourself, to me, to all its possessors, pretty much what you, I and the rest of its possessors, make it. Then you'd say, 'Heigho'—with a long breath, one-half of which had better been left in your lungs, or stomach, or somewhere there, for your pleasure and health's sake. Still I tell you it isn't so bad. Isn't so bad, I mean, making money as I do. Everybody does it here; church members and all. So here goes!

"Nan says in her letters that she knows you don't get along, although you never say a word. She says you wait and wait for patients to come ringing at your door. *Eccc*, then! (Don't *ecc*

mean *behold*? I guess it does.) Well, I'm going to run over home, one of these days. I want to see you and mother and Nan. I want to prop your affairs and mother's and Nan's up a little with some gilded pillars. Don't now, Jo, stand yourself up straight in the middle of your room, in the old way that I remember so well, lock your hands and arms together in the old way, and say—'No; nobody shall come near to see to my affairs or to prop them. I alone will see to my affairs, and so manage them, that, at last they shall stand and thrive without propping.' Because you see this would be foolish under the circumstances. *Au revoir, NAT."*

"*Post Scriptum*.—Jol keep yourself in wrestling condition. I'm a mightier fellow, altogether, than I was when you saw the last of me; so that Hugh McReid never says—'Mr. Ambrose faced them down,' but—'Mr. Ambrose turned his entire broadside upon 'em, jist 'ithout spaking at all, at all; and they succumbed, that they did, they did!' My face used to be as round as the moon in her full, you know. Now it is as large, it is, I swear! And you never saw hands like these of mine. I could establish you nicely, here on the back of my left hand; you and mother and little Nan. Perhaps I will when I come. Good-bye."

"Half good, isn't he, birdy?" said the young doctor, dipping his pen in the ink. But birdy did not say a word.

He wrote a short, lively letter to his cousin, in conclusion, telling him to be careful in his money-making, about this one thing—never, in any of the days or the hours of his life, to say a single word, or do a single act, to which, in the last of his life here, he must look back as to a blot, a stain upon his life, upon his soul. Would he think of that?

To his family he wrote first about his wife, meaning birdy. As for his business, why people didn't know yet, hadn't found it out yet that he was there close by them, with knowledge, skill and good-will enough in him, to set them all on their feet and keep them going. But never mind! by-and-bye they would understand. He sent word to grandfather that "the chiefs and ladies bright" hadn't come back, as yet, to Tara's halls; but never mind; they would come by-and-bye. Humorous messages he sent to the children; humorous as could well be, they surely were. But the parents, the eighteen-years-old Belinda, the fifteen-years-old John, and the ten-years-old Juliet had tears over them when the letter came, at the same time that they had laughter; had pity, insomuch that it amounted to heartache, at the same time that they had

hope and courage in the cheery "by-and-bye—by-and-bye." The little ones, Jerome and Hetty, laughed and danced for the funny, dear things that brother Joseph said to them; yet they stood still a little now and then, to be *sure* that their elders were really glad and not sorry; that they did really laugh and not cry.

CHAPTER III.

"My child—his name is Willy; Willy Harvey;" the mother was taking off the little fellow's cap. The little fellow looked ingenuously up into Dr. Joseph's face; and, when Dr. Joseph said, "How do you do, Master Willy?" he answered, still looking into his face—"I ain't very well, thank you. I've got a sore finger;" raising a little the hand that he carried in a sling.

"And he would come to you, Dr. Wethergreen. From our windows," pointing to a large house, which was near, although not on the same street, "he has looked over here to your's to see you and your bird sitting together. He has watched you hours since his finger has been sore, poor fellow! He seems to feel quite acquainted with you." She laughed, as if she thought Willy rather a queer little fellow for this; but the boy kept his honest face. It was clear that he had not the remotest consciousness of its being queer, or anything, but perfectly natural and consistent.

It was a felon, or a run-round, or something of the sort. Mrs. Harvey hardly knew what. She only knew that it was a very painful thing; and that Willy had taken cold in it, or it had been mismanaged, or something. She could see that it grew worse. And for the last day or two, he had been unwilling that Dr. Gravesend should touch it, or look at it, when he came. "He is so rough, you see," interposed Willy. "He hurts me so!"

"You shall see how easy *I* can be," said Joseph, beginning to take off the bandages. He talked constantly to the boy, telling him little stories about what birdy would do; and birdy was close by stepping about, tipping her head and confirming it all by her vivacious "Eho?" and her prolonged warblings. So that the finger was dressed; and, so far was Willy from having suffered by the operation, that he was soothed and ready to sleep from the touch of the gentle fingers, the sound of the gentle voice.

"Why don't you have a bird-cage for your bird, Dr. Wethergreen?" asked Willy, as he was standing with his cap in his hand ready to go.

"Because I haven't money to spare to buy one, my boy."

"My mother has just let you have some money.

Now you can buy a cage, can't you? Oh! mother, I mean to bring ours over to him. Tom's dead, you know."

"If Dr. Wethergreen would like it, certainly."

Dr. Wethergreen would like it, and be very grateful to them for it, he told them; and then they bade him "good morning," Willy saying, the second time, when he was in the door, "I shall come in and see you again, Dr. Wethergreen."

"Certainly, my boy. Good-bye."

Does anybody know of how much worth this one little incident was to our pale, young doctor? He blessed that boy, and had a warm, loving and thankful heart all day. And the next day; for the next day they came again, and a servant bringing the cage. They came for many days in close succession; for the little fellow had a hard time of it. When it was raining, or likely to rain; sometimes when it was not raining, or likely to rain, they sent for Dr. Joseph to come to them, and kept him to dinner, if they could by a little persuasion; if they could not, kept him awhile to chat with them and see the pictures and the garden. Mr. Harvey came round, more than once, with Willy in the carriage, and called to invite him to ride out on some of the pleasant country roads with them. These attentions were continued after the boy was so far recovered as to be in no need whatever of Dr. Joseph's medical services. He still came, where, as yet so few came, (and none other with face and breeding like his) showing his honest, blessed face, taking hold of the doctor's finger leading him off over to their house to dine, or to take his supper with them, or to see what papa had been bringing, or mamma making; or to walk in the garden to eat plums and peaches, and to see how his beans were growing. One day he came in bringing a beautiful little vase of porcelain, inscribed with gilt letters, "To my Friend;" he had just been to Affutt's crockery store alone, to buy it, he said. And, after that, scarcely a day passed that the little feet didn't come pattering up the stairs and along the passage, that the young voice, rich with welling love and gladness, did not call out, even before the chamber door was gained, sometimes, "I'm coming, Dr. Wethergreen. I've got something for you! some beautiful flowers; see!"

Does any one know, can any one think how great was the worth of this little boy to the pale, worn, anxious man? how great it is in the memory of it now, after so many years have passed? how great it will be while he lives, and when he lies looking over the varied past, waiting his summons? Can any one think? There have

been others, it may be, with like needs, who have met like ministries. If there have been any such, they know.

CHAPTER IV.

DR. JOSEPH was a very elegant man, with pleasant eyes, and a pleasant voice; with a fine form, of middling height, and easy, noble manners. To those then who just saw him here and there, who knew only this of him, that he went and came with buoyant steps, he had the undoubted air of a man thoroughly endowed, in all respects. And this makes us think how it was with a poor architect, who had his dwelling near, and who called up one day when he was on his way to his work, to ask the doctor to go in and see his sick child. He didn't suppose anything could be done for the child now, he said; or, indeed that there had been any chance from the beginning. But, of late, the doctor—Dr. Gravesend he had been having—had given the child up; as he sometimes thought, because he supposed there would be little, or no pay coming, and because he had business as much as he wanted, that would be sure to pay. Would he go?

"Certainly!" Dr. Joseph said.

Ambrose had come "running over home," as he said he should do, and stood now in the doctor's room, with huge rings on three or four fingers, with a huge chain and huge key and seal and charms dangling, and a huge shirt-pin of rough gold, mounted in gold elaborately wrought. Always, from a boy, at play when he was not at work, now he tossed a half dozen twenty-dollar pieces in his wide hand. He stopped tossing them, however, when the architect, with a look as if he half doubted his right to medical services, and even to a standing and breathing place on the earth, asked Dr. Joseph whether he would go to see his child. He Ambrose, that is, looked steadily at the doctor, holding his breath to see what he would do. When he replied, with an expression as if he wondered that the architect should doubt it, and with a voice of such genuine kindness, Ambrose breathed again, a long breath, and said—"I guess he will go, sir! If he refused, I'd toss 'im along head over heels, heels over head, all the way. I would, sir!" seeing that the architect smiled.

The architect gave Dr. Joseph directions at the door; and there they parted. The doctor, accompanied by Ambrose, went to see if any thing could be done for the sick child, the architect went another way to his work, with a hod for bricks upon his shoulder, and cumbered with

trowels and other implements of the mason's trade. For now, in this time of great need, he could no more depend upon his beautiful art, for which there was but slow requisition as yet at M——. He must go here and there with the carpenters and the masons, often with burdens heavy to be borne. This day his shoulders were bent beneath them. And his whole manhood too was bowed this day, for the child growing paler and more like wax every hour, for the eyes becoming larger and brighter, and for the dear voice which had more and more of the new, strange melody in it, as if very soon it would "go wavering away up to heaven," to be heard no more at the door when he came, nor at the board where they had their simple meals.

He turned to look after the two young men as they went on with firm, elastic steps. He had watched the doctor many times before, to see how firm his step was. This day he bent his head more and more, as he again went forward with his trowels and his hod. He said within himself—"There's a man, there are some men who can be happy; who have nothing in their way."

Yes, brother; even as thou canst, even as the most severely tried one can, if he calls home his trust from that which is without, from the friends or the riches that he has or desires, and bids it repose quietly in his own soul; if he does it, knowing and feeling in every nerve and fibre of his being, that there the great, the loving Father dwells *always*, if he would but know it, if he would but feel it; that He waits there always to take His child close to Him, to breathe into him the breath of His own exalted strength and serenity. So that, in the midst of the downfall of his dearest mortal comforts, he may still be blest; blest even beyond what that man can conceive who sits with his unbroken possessions all around him, keeping his eyes forever on them, his whole mind forever on them, trusting in them, believing in them, trusting and believing in nothing greater, nothing dearer. Only—only, he *must* have more of them; more riches, more friends; for, some how, of all that he has, not one thing can he take to himself close, keep it close, feeling his innermost life satisfied thereby. He must have one more treasure, one more friend. Oh, for one more! for the *right* one, that shall satisfy him, so that he may feel the mental hungering and thirsting no more forever.

Yes; he gets them. There they are, the treasure on his board, the friend on his heart. And because they are there, he says to himself, "This shall be enough. Nor shall I want and search no more."

But see whether it is enough. See whether the old longing, the old discontent does not soon again creep in upon him. And this is because he did not *first* render himself worthy of his gift of the earthly, by his greater love of the heavenly. Christ taught this same lesson, when He said—"Seek first the kingdom of heaven," meaning the the "kingdom that is not meat and drink, but the doing the will of the Father"—"and all these things shall be added unto you."

The philosophers teach it, when they say—"And thus does the poor child of eternity, going forth from his native home, and surrounded on all sides by his heavenly inheritance, which yet his trembling hand delays to grasp, wander with fugitive and uncertain steps throughout the waste; everywhere laboring to establish for himself a dwelling-place, yet happily ever reminded by the speedy downfall of each of his succeeding habitations, that he can find peace nowhere but in his Father's house."

We wonder, by the way, if any one of our young and lively readers have impatience because we tarry so long out of our legitimate business of story-telling. We would deplore this, gentle ones; because we would gladly help you to patience and pleasure at all times, and especially when we speak of this dearest, sublimest of all truths; this truth the least understood of all.

We are not always to sit here in the familiar places to write; nor are you to be here always in the familiar places to read. This we feel; and we would now and then say some of those things that it best befits us to say, best befits you to hear, as we and you go on toward our dying hour, toward the home that is beyond that hour. We would that all, we who write and you who read, might not so often have discontent, that we might not so habitually disregard the true riches, the true capacity and beauty within us, while we go searching for this and for that which lies beyond us; and that too with an avidity, which, of itself, demonstrates our unworthiness of success, our unfitness for its serene, Christ-like enjoyment. And we would too that the hodge-poles, and all the poor and troubled, may know that the *supreme* good is in readiness for them, the same as for others; that God dwelleth in them, the same as He dwelleth in others; and that treasures and friends, although they are indeed beautiful and dear accessories of the divine life, can never be pressed into our service as its substitutes.

The poor architect's child was dying when Dr. Joseph came; dying gently and with such wonderfully bright-looking eyes, that nurse was

saying to a neighbor as he went in—"She'll live to be a blessing to her poor father yet."

The child died at midnight, just as a fearful shower of lightning and dashing rain was clearing itself away from the face of the moon. She was the last of his household. The wife Jane, the child Jane both slept now; still, as he looked upon the bright spot in the sky where the black clouds were parting and taking their rim of silver radiance, it was to him as if the faces of his beloved and of the Redeemer who kept them, who was so much to him now in his time of "thick darkness," looked peacefully, benignly forth; as if they beckoned him and said—"Come: come and drink of the full fountains that satisfy. Then thou shalt have peace and strength for thy earthly work. Then shalt thou be with us still, and we will be with thee, while thou art on the earth and when thou comest hither."

He wept still, now and then, when he looked upon the stiff form and thought of all that it had been to him in his home. But he had no more bitterness or envying discontent. He loved Dr. Joseph at once, as if he were his brother; and gave him his hand, when he saw a tear fall from his eye upon the beautiful face of the dead.

Dr. Joseph himself took a lesson there of death, and of the manly resignation of the stricken father. The tear that fell was one, in part of sympathy with sorrow, in part of humility over his own life of inward repining for that which was denied, of thankless indifference for that which was given. Ambrose, who also was there to be of what service he might on the occasion, wept gushing, streaming tears, like a child; and said, more than once with his eyes on the still face—"Too bad, I swear."

"Humph!" said he, on the way with Joseph to his room—"I hated my gold, when I was there. I pulled off my rings—hateful things, I've been such a fool with 'em, you see; and tucked them into my pocket, here," striking his broad palm hard upon a side pocket; "and tucked my ox-chain and harrow and plough in out of sight; in where I shouldn't be put in mind of them, and of my miserable nonsense in wearing them, by touching them accidentally with my hand. It's done me good, you see, being there and seeing that child die. That's something I shan't forget in one day. You see, I had been thinking all along before, that, somehow my gold didn't make me any more of a man than I was before I got it. When I was there in that room I thought I understood why. I thought that perhaps God had never meant that we *should* be improved, or satisfied with anything that we can't take on with us as a sort of welcome, or preparation, or some-

thing of that sort; as a sort of shining crown, you see, for the head and a clean robe for the body, when we go where that little child has gone to-night."

The next day he went to a jeweler's with his "lot of trumpery," as he called it, when he laid it before the jeweler's eyes. He sold all but the watch that had been his father's—he would half-starve before he would sell that, he told the jeweler—and a ring for his little finger, of plain gold. "Made out of a bit of ore that a poor fellow gave me when he was dying, off there;" tossing his hand westward. "He thought I'd done him some good, poor fellow!" with his eyes on the ring. "He wanted to do something for me, you see," lifting his head now and vigorously wiping his nose—"and so he gave me this, out of his vest pocket. All you've got here, sir," running his eyes over the glittering array, "wouldn't buy this little ring; nor *begin* to."

There it was. Love blessed that ring to his soul, so that it was really and truly "added unto him;" really made a blessing and a treasure, for

this life and for the life to come. And the watch that was his father's, Love, the heaven-born, blessed that too. The rest were gew-gaws hanging about him, making him conscious at all times of self, of his outward self; and than this, there can be nothing without the range of the positive vices, more adverse to genuine nobleness of spirit, to genuine manliness and grace of deportment.

He purchased a black guard for his watch and put it on, with the old watch and the old key hanging by it. He bought back the pin, after he had once made it over to the jeweler, twisted it up close in a bit of soft paper, and put it into his pocket with his watch. The rest he had in gold—so much. And just so much as he received, he sent in that afternoon, by express, to the architect. He gave no name, nor date, nor locality. He merely wrote in an old-fashioned, irregular hand, very unlike his true, smooth, dashing style—"For value received I send you this. Use it as you would if it were express payment for one of your designs. YOUR FRIEND."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MARY'S PHRASEOLOGY.

BY EMILY H. MAY.

MARY EASTWOOD was narrating to a young friend an accident, which had come near being fatal to her father and herself.

"The horse," she said, "couldn't be stopped for ever so long. I declare I was quite frightened to death."

Her father, who had seemed to be absorbed in reading the newspaper, looked up.

"Frightened to death!" he said. "I must say, my daughter, that, for a person frightened to death yesterday, you are pretty brisk to-day."

"La! pa, you know what I mean," cried Mary, a little discomposed. "But that's the way," she continued, turning to her companion, "that pa always talks. As if one could forever say exactly what one means."

"Was it when you were coming back from Redbury, that it happened?" asked her friend.

"No, it was when we were going over to it."

"Going over!" interrupted her father, looking up again. "We didn't cross any river that I remember. We went over nothing. You should have said 'going' merely."

"Oh! dear me, I declare, pa, what a critic you are. You've gone and thrown all my ideas into a heap, and I don't know what I was saying, that I don't."

"I should think not," quietly replied Mr. Eastwood, "for you go from bad to worse. Had you said, 'What a critic you are, pa,' it would have expressed all, without the 'Oh! dear me, I declare.' Besides, you don't call it elegant, do you, to say that another person has 'gone and thrown' all your ideas 'into a heap.' I know no parallel to the first part of the phrase, except the negro idiom 'gone done,' or anything rivalling the last in vulgarity, unless it is 'knocked into a cocked-hat.' You have got into a shameful way of talking lately, Mary," he added, with severity, "and one would think you never heard correct English spoken."

The daughter crimsoned with mortification, but answered, with an attempt at composure,

"Oh! but, pa, you can't expect us girls to talk like books. I'm sure I should faint right off if I thought I had to. When one stops to calculate every word one has to say, one gets dreadfully prosy; and I'll be bound you think so yourself."

"You don't improve," replied the father. "Can

you," he added, with a tone of some vexation, "talk properly for even a minute, Mary? You don't intend to 'faint,' you know, for any such small matter as being compelled to 'talk like a book;' especially 'faint right off,' and certainly you never heard the phrase 'I'll be bound' from my lips, or that of your teachers. Remember, my dear, that an educated lady is detected by her choice of words, sooner than by almost any thing else. An intelligent gentleman instinctively avoids a woman who uses vulgar phrases, or incorrect expressions."

"Now I'm sure you're too severe, pa," cried the daughter. "Gentlemen never think of such things, unless they're stupid book-worms. A beautiful time we'd have, in society, if the beaux were always parsing one's conversation, or carrying pocket dictionaries to see if one used synonyms correctly." And Mary laughed merrily at the picture she had conjured up.

Her father smiled, but answered. "What do you mean by a beautiful time? We can properly call a landscape beautiful, or a picture, but we can't call time beautiful. Your lively tongue is forever running away with you. To be frank with you, Mary, I never hear your friend talk so at random: she is invariably correct, yet not prosaic either."

Mary's companion blushed at this compliment. The daughter colored, though from a different cause, replying hastily,

"Bless my stars, pa, you don't mean to say I don't talk like Jane."

"Jane never said, 'Bless my stars' in her whole life. Did you, Jane?"

"Oh! I don't mean that," cried Mary, coloring still higher. "I mean in our general way of talking. But you make one so nervous, pa, that I don't wonder at what I say: it's a downright miracle I don't lose my temper, that it is."

"Lest it should come to that," said Mr. Eastwood, rising, "I'll leave the room, especially as I have an engagement about this time. But, my dear, you don't mean any such thing: to use your own hyperbole, it would be a 'down-right miracle' if you did: you never do. You never think, dearest, when you speak," he said, kissing her, "or you'd be more careful in your phraseology. If you could see this half hour's

conversation written down, it might do something to cure you, for you'd then realize how very carelessly you generally talk. Young ladies get insensibly into a habit of incorrect speaking, and little dream how ridiculous they appear."

As there are many Mary Eastwoods in the world, we have followed the advice, and written down this conversation. If, by so doing, we can "hold the mirror up to Nature" to a good purpose, we shall be content.

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THE CYPRESS FOREST.

BY A. L. OTIS.

In one of those immense cypress forests which clothe the banks of the Mississippi, a father and son were working, with a doggedness and sullenness that seemed habitual. They were felling those giant cypresses, and at regular intervals of time was heard the crash of destruction, as the hoary tree, with its long beard, broke through the extended arms of its companions, and fell on its knees—literally and figuratively—before the power of man. It was winter. The western sun penetrated the woods, shone reflected from the innumerable cypress trees, and made the yard long moss that hung from the limbs look like grey beards dyed golden.

But the sunshine and the shadow seemed unheeded by those dogged laborers. Perhaps the boy gave a wandering thought to the grandeur of that wild maze of giant trunks and the netted canopy they upheld, for he sometimes glanced around and upward; but the old man's eyes were upon his work, and his heart was single in its purpose. His face expressed his soul. It was cunning and cruel. Honesty had no place there, and no right to one, for he made it his business to deplete upon the public lands. These trees belonged to government; but he unscrupulously felled them, rafted them down the river, and sold them in New Orleans. He was miserly and suspicious. Though there were many engaged in the same business, he chose to associate with none, even when doing so was to his advantage.

His son, his constant and only companion, was about twelve years old. He had a stout, broad figure, and a massive, well-shaped head. His face was heavy, and his large features were as yet undeveloped into anything prepossessing, notwithstanding his strongly marked black eyebrows, glowing eyes, and white rows of teeth. There seemed to be absolutely no expression in his face, except perhaps a quietness which was not meaningless. Though engaged in such a nefarious business, the boy had true honesty of soul. He was too young, too much accustomed to his mode of life, and too strongly attached to his father (whose old visage was doubtless beautiful in the boy's eyes, as he saw no other for nine months in the year) to see the wrong he was doing. But another vision of beauty was about to dawn upon him.

One night when sent by Mr. Clayton to the banks of the Mississippi, about five miles distant, he arrived just in time to see the surviving passengers of a steamboat which had been snagged and sunk, take their departure in another boat. In the hurry and confusion, a little girl of four years had been left behind. She had just awaked, and was screaming with terror at finding herself alone, when Robert's kind arms were placed around her. From her answers to his questions, Robert concluded that her father and nurse, with whom she had been travelling, were drowned, and he took the child home with him.

Although the little Clementine Bruger, for such was the name marked on her clothes, was an angel of delight to Robert, she was also the cause of much suffering to him—for his miserly father not only beat him unmercifully for bringing her home, but would wreak his vengeance in a similar manner upon him whenever he saw her eating, or occupying Robert's time. This suffering seemed only a joy to Robert, since it was for her sake. Mr. Clayton once attempted to strike the child, but found she had such a daring and determined defender in Robert, that afraid his son would desert him for her sake, he desisted in future.

A strange life little Clementine led. Her food, which consisted of ship-biscuit, or corn-cake, salt pork and oranges, was always placed by Robert in his own little strong box under the root of a tree. Clementine satisfied her hunger privately, never daring to eat before Mr. Clayton, lest her dearly loved Robert should suffer for it. Neither did she ever venture to caress her benefactor in his sight, for any such appearance of affection for him was sure to bring a shower of abuse upon both of them.

For Robert's sake and from terror, she learned to keep out of Mr. Clayton's way—to endure hunger, cold, and solitude, shivering with dread in a dark corner in their joyless evenings, rather than by seeking Robert's arms bring down anger upon him. Through the day she played silent plays near him, and as far as possible from his father, "pretending" the cypress knees were people she loved, and carrying on for them the business of every-day life. She would often steal up to Robert when his father's back was turned, to whisper with an arch smile, that found a faint

reflection in his face, some remarkable saying of her mute companions—or standing at a distance she would nod and beckon to him with her finger on her lips. Again she would seek out for herself a bed of the fine cypress leaves, whirled by the wind among the protecting knees, or under divided trunks of the trees. Curled up in these, like a squirrel, she took many a long nap. At night she crept into Robert's bed which she shared, and slept soundly.

Mr. Clayton did not work on Sunday, though he took that day for marking the trees to be felled during the week, and Robert enjoyed complete liberty. Then poor Clementine's face was washed, and the top of her hair smoothed, though the dark, close ringlets being beyond Robert's skill, were left undisturbed since last curled by some fond hand in her lost home.

The child had become an object of engrossing love to the boy, yet the more he felt for her the more he tried to conceal his feelings, lest by exciting her father's jealousy he should bring harsh treatment upon her. His mind took cognizance of all her plays, and his ear was strained to hear what she said, though he avoided looking at her lest his father, who, he felt, watched him, should say he wasted time upon her. The only time when he could talk to her was when he carried her in his arms to and from his work. He could then say low in her ear, or against her cheek, the few words his silent nature prompted him to speak. These were so precious to her that she would grow elated, chatter, laugh, and kiss him with resistless ebullitions of merriment or affection.

Four weeks so passed, and the spring rising had not yet filled the swamp. Mr. Clayton was impatient to leave with his lumber. Poor Robert was looking forward with dread to the time when he must take his little angel of comfort to the city, and perhaps resign her to friends and lose her forever. The time came when they were floating down the river on a raft, which Mr. Clayton and Robert managed with great difficulty, while Clementine's only care was to keep out of the water. At New Orleans Mr. Clayton—in hopes of reward—was indefatigable in making inquiries for Clementine's friends, but none came forward, and Robert, though urged to lose her in the streets, braved his father's anger, bore its fury, and kept his darling with him through two years, which she made happy ones for him. She grew in health, beauty, and a wild, joyous spirit to which privations were of no account.

Robert was now fourteen years of age, and Clementine six. He was still silent, and unmoved save by any evidence of Clementine's love, which

toward him assumed extreme gentleness and tenderness. Mr. Clayton was bowed in person and broken in constitution. Of course his avarice and ill-temper clung to him. He hastened to the cypress swamp before the unhealthy season was over, as was his custom, but this year he fell a victim to his greed. He had not been at work more than a week before he was seized with yellow fever, and died. Robert nursed him faithfully, and buried him in that scene where his worldly, miserable life was spent. Then taking Clementine on his back, and his father's strong box in his hand, he made his way through the forest to the river. There was no landing at the nearest point, the river making a sudden bend, round which swept the swift, milky current, leaving a high, sandy bluff held together and resisting the force of the water by roots of trees which had long since been cut down. A landing here was impracticable, and Robert found he must go five miles further down the river, but as darkness began to fall, he wrapped Clementine in his coat, and while she slept in his arms he pondered on his future life—and hers. He saw that he must now give her up. She must be educated, must be brought up a Christian, and must have women around her who would teach her a mother's lessons, and give her a mother's care. He had no religious knowledge or predilections. All sects were alike to him, all were worshippers, and he wished his little protegee to be a worshipper. He determined to take her to New Orleans and entrust her to the nuns. Not allowing her to be dependant upon charity, however. It was his firm determination to do every thing for her himself.

Their journey on foot terminated, they were soon on board a steamboat, and in some hours reached New Orleans. The next day poor Clementine, looking like a very savage with her full, black eyes gleaming from her matted hair, her clothes torn so that her shoulders and knees were exposed, clung screaming passionately to Robert's neck, while a kind lady abbess endeavored by grave, soothing words to entice her from him. But this only alarmed her more, and made her cling the closer to him who had saved her before, and who had been, for so long a time, her only friend. The confusion of voices seemed perplexing, almost painful to her ears, accustomed only to the "deep harmonies" of the forest. She had been in a state of bewilderment ever since she came to the city, and comprehended nothing. Her only thought was, that if she clung to Robert he would take her away from all this terrible annoyance.

He tried to quiet her, and his calm words had

her usual effect. She let him take her arms from his neck, and when, kissing her, he told her he would come to see her the very next day, she did not again refuse to let the abbess approach her, and seemed to be thinking more of his next visit than of his departure.

When he came the next day, he hardly recognized the child which came bounding toward him, dressed in a tidy blue check apron, with a clear, shining face, and close-cut, well-brushed hair. He could not help feeling sadness and regret. To be sure these things were for her good, but how much more beautiful in his eyes were her long, thick curls, though they were rough, than this cropped head—how strange to see her arms and shoulders straightened up in that close apron! Her motions seemed less free and graceful, now that her limbs were covered with a long, narrow petticoat.

Robert stayed till the last moment allowed him, and then left his beloved child, not daring to say a word. One long pressure as he kneeled beside her on the floor, and then he left her, not to see her again till she was "a child no more."

While waiting Clementine's appearance, Robert had informed the abbess of his future prospects. Hearing of a gentleman inquiring for a Mr. Clayton, from New England, Robert sought him out, hoping to meet with some one who would settle his father's affairs. He found an uncle, who with true kindness interested himself for the orphan boy. Robert was greatly surprised to find that he had an uncle who was a gentleman, with every appearance of education and refinement. He was many years younger than Robert's father, and exceedingly unlike him. It is not unusual in this country to see such diversity in one family—social position being so entirely the result of mental power in the individual, whether it be exerted for money, political influence, or literary fame.

When Mr. Clayton's affairs were wound up, Robert found that his father's savings would enable him to educate both himself and Clementine. He left New Orleans with his uncle, and resided in Boston till he entered Harvard College.

* * * * *

Robert stands again in the reception room of the convent in New Orleans. It would be impossible to recognize the ragged boy of former times in the fine-looking, polished gentleman before us. He is now a talented, young lawyer, prepared by severe study to do honor to his profession. His face still wears its quiet dignity, yet there is an under-current of the strongest feeling struggling in it. He is awaiting the appearance of his former darling, and he hopes to find her less changed

than he is. He remembers his disappointment when he first saw her, after leaving her at the convent, and he fears the entrance of some old automaton, whom he may not recognize and cannot love. He cannot be called indifferent or insensible now.

He knew absolutely nothing of her as she now was, as his uncle had objected even to correspondence with her—it being also much deprecated by the abbess. He loved her as much as ever. He dreaded coldness, forgetfulness on her part. He feared too much religious enthusiasm. Could he resign her should she wish to take the veil? A thousand thoughts of hope and fear were distracting his usually calm mind. He heard some persons coming. Suddenly the feet began to accelerate—remonstrances were heard, and the words "Oh, do let me run to dear Robbie"—a delightful laugh, a little struggle, followed by light steps running. Robert stood in extreme astonishment. Was he about to see the very child he had left? Could he clasp her again, a little darling, in his arms?

The door was thrown wide open, and Clementine stood a moment undecided before him, a beautiful, graceful girl, with full dark eyes, and glowing color. A thousand changes of expression seemed to flicker in her face, while she looked on one of extreme paleness. Their long gaze was unflinching on both sides, till Clementine sprang toward him, and threw her arms round his neck. He did not immediately release her, and the horrified Lady Abbess stood shocked at her pupil's conduct.

Clementine and Robert still regarded one another with affectionate curiosity. After another silent gaze, Clementine's eyes dwelling upon his features, while his heart trembled at her beauty—he said smiling,

"Well, do you find me the same?"

"Yes," she answered, hesitatingly. "At the first moment I did not know you, but when I saw you look so pale, I felt that you were my own dear Robbie. But now, I see that you are a young gentleman, and your face looks different to me."

"This would naturally make it look so," he said, touching her chin.

"It is not that," she answered. "It is in expression—it is in your eyes," and when she raised hers again to his scrutinizingly, her long lashes seemed to weigh the lids down, while a blush stole faintly up.

"I see you love me yet," she said.

"And you have not forgotten me?"

"Ah, no—but why have you never come to see me? I hoped so long for a visit. At

last I began to think you wished me to forget you."

"My uncle thought it best that I should not come, and I sacrificed the greatest pleasure there could be on earth for me to his wishes. It was due to him. I have written to you of the daily, hourly proofs of his generosity and kindness to me."

"But how is it thus that you have come at last?"

"My uncle is dead."

"Had you always lived with him? Have you a house of your own for us to live in?"

"No, I have no house of my own yet. We are to live with my cousin, at her beautiful country seat, not far from Boston."

"Well, I love those here dearly, but I want to go with you Robert. You were my first friend."

"You have not forgotten old times then, Clementine?"

"I shall never forget those years, dear Robbie. They have made an ineffaceable impression. I am a wild bird yet. The sisters have had a hard task with me. The older I grow, the more my savageness develops itself, the more I dream of those tall, tall trees, and the long, waving grey moss. And my nests! Oh! I laugh when I think of them, and of how I slept curled up like a kitten. How kind you were to me then!"

"We will visit the forest before we go to Boston," he answered, when she interrupted him to ask—

"But what do you think of me, Robert? How do you like me now? Don't you mean to let me be your little darling still, or am I crowded out of your heart by others?"

Robert was framing an answer fit for the ears of the abbess, when that lady reminded Clementine, that the time allotted to each visitor had expired, and she left Robert with many affectionate regrets.

The abbess fearful that Robert might misunderstand Clementine's artless expressions of affections, informed him that they had always accustomed her to regard him as a father, as one who was generous and kind to her, but who would find in wife and children objects dearer than herself. She ended by an earnest entreaty, which came from the bottom of her heart, that one she had loved as her child might not be taken from her. Robert could not reply. He stood pale and deeply moved, thinking as calmly as he could. But seeing the abbess about to renew her entreaties, he said he should do nothing rashly, and took his leave. Perhaps her arguments might have influenced him, had it been Clementine's wish to remain, but knowing

from herself that she desired to leave the convent, he did not hesitate long to do as her feelings and his own dictated. * * * * *

Robert and Clementine stood again in the old cypress forest. How great the change they found there! The river had forced its way directly through the swamp, where Robert had so often felled trees. The high bluff was now an island in the river, which was by this "cut-off" made twenty miles shorter, an occurrence not unfrequent in that impetuous stream. The cabin and the grave were buried beneath the edge of the now sluggish current, and a steamboat landing was above them. It was in the earlier months of spring. The tall magnolias with their creamy blossoms, the flaky snow of the fringe tree, and thousands of flowers springing in savage luxuriance from the dark soil, would have made the forest gorgeous had it not been for the veiling, sweeping moss, which tempered the glowing colors with its mysterious, misty grey. "We are here again alone, Clementine," said Robert. "But all is changed—all is as much more beautiful as our feelings toward each other might be. We too are not the same."

"Oh, Robert, no two people were ever so little changed by so long a time as we. If what I have been told of the world be true, love does not often live so long a life. They tried to teach me that you would forget me. I did not believe them. Oh, no, indeed."

"Clementine," Robert answered, taking her hand from his arm, to hold it in his. "I can never forget you. I love you."

She turned to him with a frank smile, saying, "Ah, and don't I love you too?"

A deep, deep sigh made her bright, arch face sadden, as she turned questioningly to look at him.

"I love you, Clementine—but you do not love me," he added, with some bitterness.

"I do, I do, Robert."

"Enough to be my wife?" he asked, hopelessly.

"Why—yes—dear Robert—if I am not too young for you. Would not daughter be better?"

Those who know in what utter seclusion both from the world, and from book of the world, girls educated in a convent are kept, will not think Clementine's conduct unnaturally infantile.

Her reply, though he expected not much better, was a shock to Robert, and on pretence of seeking some blossoms for her, he left her to conceal his discomposure. She thought meanwhile earnestly, and felt that her reply had been ungrateful. "I should be whatever he wishes," she thought, "and I *will*, for I owe him every thing."

When he returned she said penitently,

"Robert, I do love you, and being your wife is an unexpected honor, which, since you have suggested it, I may not find it easy to forget," a little speech she had composed for the occasion, out of the gratitude of her heart.

"Clementine," he said gently, and very sadly, "you do not understand your own heart—and mine—is so strangely agitated that I hardly know it to be mine. We will say no more about loving each other, till we have each proved our affection. You will see many handsomer, gayer, and more pleasing gentlemen at my cousin's. You are but sixteen, and not till you are twenty, will we speak of this matter again."

"I feel sure that I can promise now, Robert, to be your's forever."

"No, no! No promise! Give me nothing but freely granted affection."

"Well, well, dear Robert, at least let me love you in peace, and don't try to place such a distance between us. I cannot promise not to say I love you, because, you know, I must speak of what I think."

"It will be better for me if you do not."

"Oh, Robert, I cannot comprehend you! Do you not want me to love you?"

"My disappointment would be the more cruel, if you were to love another."

"More than you? That I am *sure* I shall never do." * * * * *

It was but one year from this time, when Robert stood looking from his study window over Boston's glorious harbor, while between lay pretty gardens, dotted with white houses, stretching to the shore. But his eyes were soon withdrawn from the landscape they had been so calmly resting upon, to fill with trouble as they gazed into the orchard under his window. Two persons were walking there. He dwelt fondly upon the graceful form of the lady, or turned with contempt from the polite dandyism of her companion. The latter plucked a spray of apple-blossoms, which he was about to place in the beautiful curls resting on her cheek. The blood mounted to Robert's temples. Clementine turned back her head, and raised her hand to take the flower, while the gentleman's head was yet bent forward, as if making some complimentary speech. Her movement brought her lips close to his, and he did not neglect the tempting opportunity.

Robert tingling with anger, was going instantly to bestow the punishment he imagined the act deserved, when a thought changed his purpose. Would Clementine wish him punished?

"I must think of her as my child. She regards me only as her preserver—her father," he said,

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bitterly. At this moment she came running up stairs, and seeing him, threw herself on the sofa beside him, evidently in some excitement.

"Oh, Robert," she said, "I am safe here—near you."

He turned away at first, but said the next moment, "Yes, Clementine, always come to me as to a father." It cost him an effort, and Clementine a pang, which occasioned a little start, not imperceptible to Robert.

"As to a protector—yes, Robert," she answered, hesitatingly, and with embarrassment.

"And why not—father?"

"As to one I reverence certainly. Oh, Robert, it is a pity you were the first gentleman I ever knew, for I have no charity for others, when I see in you what they are all so far from being."

He was displeased. "You are too complimentary, Clementine. He smiled, however, as he added, "You know I like my character treated with silent respect. How dare you 'praise me? But dear Clementine, why cannot you come to me as to a father?" Robert needed many of those tell-tale blushes to awaken in his heart the hope which had almost died out.

"Well, Robert, you shall be father-confessor now. I almost regret my old faith when I have to bear my sins alone."

"No, no, Clementine," he said, turning away, "do not confess to me."

"And to whom then, if not to my father-confessor? I do not dare to exculpate myself, till I know *you* do not condemn me. I fear I have done wrong, and you must tell me whether I have or not, for you are my conscience. What have I done that Mr. — should dare to kiss me?"

Her eyes kindled angrily as she spoke, and she looked eagerly for a reply.

"Have you not been pleased with the attentions of which he has been so very lavish."

"Yes," she said, blushing with shame.

"And do you really think they were worth much?"

"No, they were from one I despise."

Robert's brow was clearing, but his tone was still severe.

"Why did you accept them? Why did you flatter him by listening to him and seeming pleased?"

"I was pleased."

"Why, Clementine?"

"Because he is a man of the world, and a novelty in my experience. Because of his surpassing self-conceit. It was amusing to see him taking such pains, merely that I might laugh in my sleeve at his folly. He wanted to dazzle and

captivate the unsophisticated girl just out of a convent. Ought he to have no punishment for concluding that I had no discrimination, no better sense than to be pleased with such vapid flattery?"

"Clementine you did wrong. That was coquetry, and in his presumption you have met a just punishment."

"And one still harder to bear in your disapproval," she answered, in a low tone.

"Ah, Clementine, you do not care for my opinions or my feelings, or you could not have seemed to be throwing away your heart's best gifts on that contemptible man."

She looked up smiling through her tears, and asked archly,

"Did it make your heart ache?"

"Yes, dearest Clementine."

"I am glad of that," she faltered, with an attempt to hide her earnestness in a smile.

He paused, and the blood again rushed to his face. "You are glad that I am jealous? You

value my love? Look at me, Clementine—let me read in your eyes that you are not trifling, that you *do* value my love. Look! you will only see how it beams there for you, rising full from my very heart. Tormentor! Will you not let me read that you are in earnest? Your face will speak truth."

"I cannot, Robert, my face would reflect yours."

"You love me?"

An answer was not necessary.

We will listen but to one more remark of Robert's, which shall be recorded here to show the sagacity of the abbess who had charge of Clementine's education, who though shut up in a convent, penetrated to some secrets of the human heart.

"Clementine, when your mother abbess was warning me against misunderstanding your expressions of affection, she said, 'When she really loves you, she will tremble and be silent.' I have looked long for this token. I see it at last."

A MISTAKE: AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

BY ELLA RODMAN.

AUNT HIGBEE and cousin Silas Overing were travelling to the city together.

Aunt Higbee was somewhat deaf, although she never would admit it; and the organs of understanding pertaining to Silas Overing were like the mirrors that present everything in a distorted shape. These, with the noisy engine, were materials enough for even greater mistakes than that which ensued. Their conversation was conducted in a sort of suppressed screech, owing to the noise of the cars, and much more than was intended reached the public ear.

"Have you seen 'the Squire's' new parlor?" commenced Silas, thinking it incumbent upon him to entertain his neighbor.

"Trainford's, you mean?" screamed back aunt Higbee, "no, I ain't bin there sence the wing was put on. But what on airth can he want of a new parlor? I should think he needed a wife a great deal more."

Silas was just preparing to scream "What?" in his highest key, but having caught the word "wife," he concluded that he had heard aright, and went on with:

"That's jest what I was sayin'—there is a wife in the case, you may depend on't!"

"Eh?" said aunt Higbee, following the precept of doing as she would be done by, and screaming so that all the passengers around her started.

"I say," repeated Silas, in a voice that left not a chance of his not being heard, "that Squire Trainford is going to be married?"

This assertion was accompanied by a series of winks and knowing looks, meant to arouse his companion to a conviction of his shrewdness in guessing; but aunt Higbee was obtuse, and, far from giving Silas any particular credit, thought this merely the *vox populi* speaking through a single mouth.

"Well, I declare!" said she, meditatively, her fingers busy with the black bag which she always carried, "I hadn't even heerd of their bein' engaged!"

"Engaged?" repeated Silas, "I thought that was it? Who did you say 'the Squire' was engaged to?" he continued, bending eagerly toward his companion.

Aunt Higbee, however, thought this question merely a ruse to entrap her into a display of

ignorance; and determined not to let Silas have the pleasure of supposing that she considered him at all overstocked with information, she answered quite tartly,

"To whom *should* he be engaged but Mary Infield? Don't all the village know *that*?"

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Silas, delighted with this unexpected intelligence. "Well, I'm really glad of it—Mary's a nice girl."

"Yes," replied aunt Higbee, who had heard only the latter part, "she's almost past bein' a girl, now—but I can very well remember when she was the beauty of the place. That was jest after her father died."

"Gracious!" continued Silas, reflectively, "how I used to set in church watchin' them eyes of hern, and thinkin' that they looked as though she'd bin polishin' of 'em up with a piece of soft velvet, or somethin'! They ain't so bright, now-a-days."

"Poor thing!" said aunt Higbee, commiseratively, "but even now," she continued, "she's got a kind of look about her—not proud exactly, either—but then, somehow or other, I never could take the liberty of *asking* her if she was engaged to Squire Trainford."

"Well," said Silas, "I think that, all things considered, she has done pretty well for herself, and Squire Trainford will get a good wife. But they might jest as well have done it years ago."

Aunt Higbee made no reply, and after awhile her companion relapsed into silence.

The truth is, the old lady was anything but pleased that Silas should have gained this information before her—she who so particularly prided herself upon knowing just what was going on among her neighbors, and who, as she often informed them, could "put that and that together." Now, too, she could take no pleasure in her trip to the city, so anxious was she to get home and inquire into particulars. She loved to make a prominent figure in every occurrence; and after pondering over the matter a long time, she determined to signalize herself in a manner that will transpire hereafter.

Those who have undertaken to converse in cars under the disadvantages before mentioned, will not be surprised at the fabulous nature of the communications given and received; for,

although aunt Higbee would have sworn to any court of law, that Silas Overing had told her of Mary Infield's engagement to Squire Trainford, and Silas stoutly maintained that aunt Higbee, herself, informed him, the truth of the matter was that neither had told the other anything of the kind, and that there was nothing of the kind to tell.

But while aunt Higbee and Silas go their different ways from the car station, we may as well look in upon the parties most interested.

A little way off from the village, as though too aristocratic to mingle with the residences around, stood the dwelling known as Squire Trainford's. It was beautifully situated on a piece of rising ground, and clasped in from the outer world by tall trees that in summer time made an almost perpetual twilight.

Having entered the immense hall, which looked like a room itself, visitors were shown into a parlor that seemed exactly in keeping with the rest of the place. The cane-bottomed sofa and chairs looked light and summer-like—the large flower-pot in the hearth of the great Franklin was always arranged with particular care—and the asparagus-tops over the looking-glass nodded complacently in the summer breeze that came in through the open windows. Bright rays of sunshine slanted down on the grass without; and the wind murmured among the pines like a tired child singing itself to sleep.

This was Mary's favorite room; and although, with her taste for the refinements of life, she would have liked pictures on the walls, and books and bronzes scattered around, she never mentioned these improvements to "the Squire," who pretended to despise everything that was not meant solely for use.

"The Squire," as he was called, from deference probably to his superior position, was one of the sunniest-tempered, most generous-minded, self-distrustful men that ever reached the age of forty-five in a state of single blessedness. He was proud of his farm, and liked to have it praised; but his neighbors were quite welcome to the benefit of all his now improvements, and he really enjoyed giving away his possessions. Notwithstanding this disposition, he continued a rich man, and everything prospered with him. His farm was one of the most beautiful in the county; his oxen always looked so sleek and well-fed, his hired hands so diligent, and his barns and store-houses so bursting with plenty.

A custom of ten years' standing had rendered it the most natural thing in the world for Mary Infield to keep house for him; and yet the neighbors could well remember the time when they considered her abode there something strange

and new. The orphan child of a ruined city merchant, who, when dying, had no nearer friend than Edward Trainford, Mary was taken at once to his house, and placed under the care of his maiden sister. But after a few years the sister departed to a home of her own; and Mary remained as before, except that she now took the whole charge of the household, and ordered things entirely her own way. This "way" never failed to please her guardian—an office which boasted only a name—but Mary would not have acknowledged, even to herself, that this result was premeditated.

When Mary Infield first went to live with the Trainfords, in the full bloom of youth and beauty, and accustomed to every luxury and indulgence, she had, without knowing it, a haughtiness of manner that effectually distanced her humble-minded guardian; who, neither surprised nor angry that she should, as he imagined, look down upon him, meekly worshipped his divinity at a respectful distance.

Very beautiful was this haughty idol; eyes that, though generally cast down, yet when lifted from this drooping attitude, seemed almost to scorch any pair detected in the act of watching them—arms borrowed from one of those wondrous statues that we gaze on in a shaded room hung with crimson drapery—and features moulded after those classic faces that captivated Greek and Roman warriors.

Sometimes, when the "Squire" sat in the shade of a butternut tree, during haying season, Mary would trip off to him with a pitcher of fresh water; and the good man, who was more familiar with his Bible than with any of the modern romances, thought, as he marked the curve of those beautiful arms in balancing the pitcher on her head, and the wealth of rich, dark hair, of Rebecca at the well; and then he imagined himself fastening a gold bracelet on the snowy wrist, until he was aroused from his reverie by Mary's laughing remonstrance, and perhaps a dash of cold water.

At first the city-bred belle had imagined herself in love with one of the "airy nothings" who had hovered around her as moths seek a blaze; but as time passed, and he who had sworn "fidelity until death," departed with her other friends, Mary began to smile at her past life, and gradually dawned upon her conviction the noble qualities of her so-called guardian. Indomitable pride was the prominent feature in Mary's character; and the idea of bestowing an encouraging look upon any man who was not on his knees was a monstrosity, not once to be thought of.

When the young beauty first blazed upon his sight, the kind-hearted "Squire," chilled by her proud bearing, had said to himself that it would not be generous to tell her of his feelings *then*, for it would seem to imply that she was not welcome to a home there upon any other terms; and as years passed, he made up his mind that it would be an utter impossibility for Mary ever to love *him*, and magnanimously resolved not to let her even suspect his folly. And Mary did not suspect it; though whether *she* would have called it "folly" remains to be decided.

In the years that had passed, Mary had become a thoughtful woman; and a long communion with Nature had imbued her with a reverential admiration for the good and noble. She beheld Edward Trainford without the trappings of artificial life, and without the polish of artificial society; and felt that, had she given vent to the constant murmur in her heart, it would have been: "*Whither thou goest, I will go.*"

And so matters stood; another proof that the world is full of paper walls.

The cloudless June sun had dawned upon Mary Infield's thirtieth birthday, and the first grey hair lay like a thread of silver amid her clustering braids. She leaned against the window, and her still beautiful cheek was wet with tears.

Mr. Trainford rallied her upon her depression at the breakfast-table; and her lip curled with something of its old scorn, as she proudly determined that he should not suspect the cause.

It was a weary day, one of the longest that she had ever known; and in the evening, Mary sat leaning her head sadly on her hand, thinking over all those past years, while Edward Trainford, under the pretence of his newspaper, was watching her by the soft light of the shaded lamp. The curve of that beautiful lip seemed engraven upon his heart; and he half trembled lest she should raise her eyes suddenly and flash upon him the full light of their scorn.

One of the house-servants entered the room, and deposited a large box, directed to "Miss Mary Infield."

The "Squire" started up, glad of an excuse for conversation.

"May I open it, Mary? You look too tired to take the trouble."

Mary gave a calm assent, and yet she *did* feel a little natural curiosity to know what it contained. Several wrappers were removed, and a large cake, with a great deal of pretension in the frosting, was discovered. Mary looked at her guardian in surprise, and he looked at her.

"Well," exclaimed the "Squire," with his pleasant laugh, "this looks as though you were a little girl at boarding-school, and your friends were afraid of your being starved out. It is very kind of them, certainly."

But Mary was not to be put off so. The "Squire" reserved his search, and soon brought to light a letter which Mary carelessly requested him to read. It was from aunt Higbee, and ran thus:—

"MY DEAR MARY—You've bin most awful sly, but a little bird has whispered in my ear that you're goin' to be married to Squire Trainford, and hopin' that I'm not too late, I've taken the liberty of makin' you a weddin'-cake. I had grate work with the top part to make it stick, but if you are right keeful, I think it'll last sometime. You might jist as well have got married years ago, but I 'spose you both took time to consider of it. Give my respects to the Squire and do not forget my invite."

Aunt Higbee considered this a very creditable performance, having "squared herself out" for some hours to accomplish her task, and little dreamed of the reception it was doomed to meet with.

Edward Trainford read on to the end in a state of complete amazement; and when it was finished Mary burst into tears. Indignation, shame, and every other emotion seemed struggling together; but the "Squire," poor man! was terribly alarmed lest she should suspect *him* of spreading the report, and in his consternation he exclaimed:

"I didn't do it, Mary! I would not, for worlds, have said such a thing!"

"I fully believe you, sir!" and Mary seemed to have added two or three feet to her height, for she supposed this particularly intended to discourage any hopes that she might have formed, "I fully believe you, and I shall leave this house to-morrow."

Her words fell upon him like a thunderbolt; and hastily seizing his hat, he commenced pacing the piazza in a state of desperation. He did not possess the power of saying precisely the right thing at the right moment, and he did not dare to look toward the parlor, or he might have seen Mary on her knees beside the table, sobbing as though her heart would break.

"Well, 'Squire!'" exclaimed Silas Overing, as he mounted the steps completely out of breath, "I've come to offer my congratulations."

"I don't know what for," replied the "Squire," more shortly than was his wont, "unless it is for the ridiculous mistake of a silly old woman, who has made me feel more unhappy than I ever did before."

"So its a mistake, is it?" said Silas, while his countenance risibly fell, "what awful stories that old woman does tell! But I don't see, either," he continued, reflectively, "why its so very 'ridiculous,' after all—it more seem very nat'ral for you and Mary to git married. What is there so 'ridiculous' in it?"

"Because," was the dejected reply, "it is ridiculous to think of Mary's fanoing me."

"Well, now, I don't think so," said Silas, in a matter-of-fact way, "she ain't very young, nor you neither—she ain't got no money, and you've got plenty—she's kind of stuck-up like, and you're kind of easy—I guess you're nigh about matched."

The "Squire" shook his head quite unconvinced; but Silas, who seemed determined to stick to the subject, next inquired:

"Has she ever *told* you she couldn't fancy you?"

"I never gave her reason to do so," replied the 'Squire.'

"Well, now, look here!" continued Silas, struck with a bright idea, "*my* advice is jest to go and *give* her reason at once, and I'll bet anythin' that she won't say nothin' of the sort! It seems so kind of foolish like to have people believin' things that ain't true."

Silas appeared to consider this a sufficient reason for immediate exertion, but he now wisely left the "Squire" to himself; and after a few more turns on the piazza, during which he had fully persuaded himself that he was doing nothing wrong, and that Mary could, at the worst, but say "no," Edward Trainford entered the parlor.

Mary averted her face, to be sure, and was angry that he should see her crying; but with

more confidence than he had ever supposed himself possessed of, the "Squire" seated himself near her, and began the longest speech that he had ever made in his life.

Having set before her all the whys and wherefores and becauses, he began: to think that Silas Overing possessed more sense than he had ever given him credit for; for Mary smiled, at last, through her tears, and then did Edward Trainford learn how long and fondly he had been loved: Mary and he sat there in the parlor a long while, that night; and he thought, with a sigh, that, as aunt Higbee said, they might just as well have been married years ago.

The wedding-cake was put in circulation, and the donor had one of the most honored seats at the nuptial feast. But this, it must be mentioned, was entirely Edward's work, who expressed so much gratitude to aunt Higbee for her most fortunate officiousness, that the old lady went home from the wedding-feast considerably puffed up with self-complacency.

The summer parlor at the "Squire's" presents quite an altered appearance; for as soon as Mary felt free to make the slightest allusion to improvements, pictures, bronzes, and books sprouted up as if by magic. Mary laughingly declares that there is an Aladdin's lamp somewhere among the kitchen rubbish, which the "Squire" rubs in secret; but he as positively asserts that the only witchcraft about the place is that lodged in Mary's keeping.

Aunt Higbee and Silas have not, to this day, settled the quarrel between them as to who was the relator of that disputed piece of news, but keep up a perpetual chorus of "Katy did," and "Katy didn't."

THE FAIR CATHARINE.

BY E. K. SMITH.

THE pealing clangour of many bells—the tapestry and fine carpeting suspended from window and balcony—the streets crowded with citizens in their gayest apparel—all betokened a grand festival day in the ancient city of Liege, in the earlier part of the seventeenth century. It was so. One of the frequently-recurring quarrels between Ferdinand of Bavaria, the Prince-Bishop, and his turbulent subjects, the burghers, had been happily adjusted, and, in honor of the reconciliation, the magnates of Liege were about to proceed in grand array through the city, and finish by attending a solemn high mass in the cathedral of St. Lambert. On the elevated portico of a public building, so as to have a good view of the procession, stood two young men of gentlemanly appearance. One, whose ambitious spirit gleamed through a frank and open countenance, was a citizen of Liege, of considerable wealth and good family, named William Beekman. The other, whose mild and amiable features seemed to conceal a lurking poetic fervor, was the painter Gerard Dow, then just returned from the classic shores of Italy, where he had been studying art with all the ardor of an enthusiast. Beekman had promised his companion that, as the procession passed, he would point out his affianced bride, Catharine Ardspine, whom in a few days he was to marry. Accordingly, when the banners of St. Bartholomew's defiled along the narrow street, he, by a glance of his eye, indicated to the artist a young lady remarkable for her modest grace and beauty. As long as she remained in sight, Dow could not withdraw his eyes from the lovely apparition, and, when lost to view in the moving crowd, he felt how he could have loved her had she not been the betrothed of his friend. Immersed in thought, he saw no more of the pageant, till roused by Beekman saying—"Come, we must follow close after the procession, or we shall not be able to obtain a place in the cathedral." Entering that sacred edifice, the young men joined in the ceremonies of their religion, and after the parting benediction had been given, they still lingered in the lofty aisle, to avoid the pressure of the dispersing assemblage. Dow, lost in reverie, was endeavoring to re-establish the serenity of his mind, which the sight of the

fair Catharine had so rudely disturbed. Beekman, joyous in hope and good fortune, not observing his companion's absence of mind, abruptly said—"Is she not a beautiful girl?"

"Charming; and she loves you?" inquired Dow.

"Very much indeed."

"What is her family?"

"Very honorable; but she, being an orphan, has only an uncle, who brought her up, an old canon of St. Bartholomew's."

"Has she a fortune?"

"But little; that, however, does not signify; her fortune is to come. That is what so particularly attaches me to Catharine. Her uncle, the canon, is a famous astrologer; you saw him in the procession—the tall old man, with grey hair and ruddy countenance, round whom the people pressed with reverence and affection. Well, he has foretold great things for the husband of his niece, and who knows? for so far all his predictions have proved correct. He warns the poor of tempests and change of weather, that is the reason why they revere him so!"

"Between ourselves, then, if it is a fair question, what has he predicted?"

"Well, my dear Gerard, I may tell you the secret. He has read in the stars that the man whom his niece espouses will rise to high station; for her horoscope foretells that the happiest period of her life will be when her husband is raised by his fellow-citizens above themselves."

This mysterious vaticination of astrology threw Dow into another reverie, from which he was again startled by his friend exclaiming—"Let us proceed to my house and clear our dress from the dust of the procession; then I will introduce you to the fair Catharine and the good canon, her uncle."

"Willingly."

"Are you," rejoined Beekman, "a Grumbler or a Swallow-tail?"

The artist, surprised, repeated the words grumbler and swallow-tail, which were quite new to him; the other, perceiving his perplexity, explained that those were then the slang terms for the two rival factions into which the citizens of Liege were divided. The dandies of the aristocracy who adhered to the Prince-Bishop, wearing a new

Parisian dress, were, from its peculiar cut, named swallow-tails; the other and larger party, to which Beekman belonged, and which advocated the rights of the people, wore the old national costume, and were termed grumblers. Gerard, after receiving this enlightenment, said, "As for myself, I am a painter."

"Right," replied Beekman. "Your Roman costume cannot displease any one."

The two friends passed into Beekman's house, from whence after readjusting their dress, they sallied forth on their way to the dwelling of the learned canon. On arriving there, Catharine herself opened the door, and received the visitors with artless grace.

"I present you," said Beekman, "a pupil of the renowned Rembrandt, a Roman, or, I should say rather, a native of Liege, just returned from Rome, who excels in portraits, and will be happy to paint yours."

The young girl blushed, while Dow felt very awkward and ill at ease.

"Can we see your uncle?" continued Beekman. "I wish to make my friend known to him."

"He is fatigued," said Catharine. "He spent nearly all last night on the tower of St. Bartholomew's observing the heavenly bodies; but you know he always likes to see you. He is in his study with a friend."

Saying those words, Catharine opened a door, which led into a large apartment, but in which there was scarcely room to move, it was so blocked up with spheres, astrolabes, quadrants, compasses, and other astronomical and mathematical instruments, while the seats and floor were littered with books and manuscripts. Dow on entering this room perceived a gentleman, about sixty years of age, whose countenance wore a peculiar expression of mingled genius and benevolence, and whom Beekman thus addressed—

"Ah! my respected father, how does your *Centuries* progress?"

"I am still busy with the last volume, my son; and am more convinced than ever of the advantage to be gained by us moderns from the study of ancient history."

Gerard did not recognize in the last speaker the canon he had seen in the procession. In fact, he was the canon's friend that Catharine had just spoken of, the celebrated Lurtet de Chokier, who, if his historical works be forgotten, is still remembered in Liege by his hospitals and other charitable foundations. In the mean time, and older man, holding in his hand a scroll covered with a hieroglyphics, emerged from the

embrasure of a window, where he had been concealed by a pile of ponderous folios. He was the uncle of Catharine, the renowned Matthew Laensbergh, canon of St. Bartholomew's, professor of philosophy, mathematics, and astrology.

"Thanks, my brave William," he exclaimed, taking hold of Beekman's hand, "you have brought me an artist, a great painter; he must be one of our friends."

"Did I did not tell you," said Beekman, turning to Dow, "that he was a wizard of the good kind, though he has no dealings with Satan? But see how he divines."

The painter, not a little surprised, saluted the old man.

"When do you publish your almanack?" said Beekman.

"Not yet," replied the astrologer; "I wish to live in peace, and the physicians annoy me already, because, as they say, I infringe on their exclusive right of being the medical advisers of the people."

"But," said Beekman, "so few can read, your almanack will only be useful to the higher classes."

"Not so, my son. There are few but understand numerals; and here," showing a specimen sheet, "is the mode I intend to convey information to the illiterate by means of emblems. Thus, when it is the fortunate time to plough, I have inserted a representation of that useful implement of husbandry; here a pair of scissors, when the stars are favorable for hair-cutting; there a lancet shows the desirable period for blood-letting."

The conversation then became general. The intelligent and eloquent artist, fresh from the eternal city, was, in those days of limited travel, a great acquisition to the canon's circle. While he spoke of Italy as the land of art, Laensbergh claimed it, through Galileo and others, as the birth-place of science. Dow left the house delighted and astonished with the uncle; and, in spite of all his efforts, captivated by the niece.

Two days before the marriage of Catharine, whether she commenced to doubt the sincerity of the sentiment she entertained for her betrothed, or for any other reason, she demanded earnestly from her uncle that he would reveal to her the horoscope of her husband. "I do not know it, my child," said the good canon; "I have never cast it. Life has enough of disquietudes without our seeking to know too much. Everything will happen as God ordains. It is sufficient for you to know that Beekman is a worthy, honorable man—a little too ambitious, perhaps, but, as I have often told you, it is your

lot to have a husband who will be raised to a high station."

The marriage of Catharine and Beekman was celebrated with great splendor. Dow, who was present, astonished his friends by announcing his departure on the following day. He felt that absence was the only means of stifling the unhappy passion he so unwillingly conceived for Catharine. Accordingly, the day after the wedding, he set out toward Germany.

The history of Liege for several centuries is merely a succession of insurrections for freedom, power, and sometimes—in strict historical truth—for license, against a series of tyrannical and narrow-minded rulers. One of the most incompetent of the Prince-Bishops, who so long misgoverned that city, was Ferdinand of Bavaria; consequently, no period could have been more favorable to the ambitious aspirations of Beekman, who by his wealth, energy, and abilities, soon made himself the principal leader of the party of the people termed the Grumblers. The folly of the Prince-Bishop gave him his first advancement. A tax was laid upon meat. The butchers declared that, if any attempt were made to levy this obnoxious impost, they would, like Adolphus Waldeck, cut and sell their meat sword in hand. At this very crisis a burgomastership became vacant, and the guilds, carried away by the popular *furor*, elected Beekman to that office, although it had always been previously filled by a much older man. This was the first step toward the fulfilment of his wife's horoscope. The Prince-Bishop, enraged at this election, demanded that it should be cancelled; the guilds refused, and the bishop maddened by their refusal, committed a still grosser act of folly. On the next morning, when the cathedral of St. Lambert was opened, the officiating priest found a sealed paper on the high altar. Summoning the burgomasters, he opened and read it at the church door; it proved to be a sentence of excommunication, launched by the Prince-Bishop, placing the whole city in *interdict*. Beekman seized the paper, and, mounting on a bench, read it to the assembled populace. Having concluded, he cried—"Liege is the daughter of Rome, as the motto on the great seal of our city states—*Legia, Ecclesiæ Romanæ unica filia*. The Pope alone has the right to excommunicate us."

"It is true," exclaimed a collier; "down with Ferdinand of Bavaria!"

Beekman threw the document among the crowd who tore it into pieces.

Amongst cries of "down with the Prince-Bishop! long live the brave Beekman! down

with the Swallowtails!" a shout of "to the Perron!" was raised, and immediately re-echoed by a thousand voices.

"To the Perron—to the Perron! we must elect a Mambour!"

The Perron, the grand outer staircase in front of the Town Hall, in the great square, was the time-honored forum of the people of Liege. The Mambour was the citizen chosen to conduct the affairs of government, during the interregnum occasioned by the death or deposition of a prince bishop.

Beekman trembled with joyful anticipation. In the popular excitement he was certain to be elected. "As Mambour," he muttered to himself, "I shall have the right of levying and leading the troops of Liege. I shall be dictator. Who knows? I may yet be a prince. The horoscope is bravely being fulfilled." But, on the crowd arriving at the Perron, they found, standing on its upper landing, two old men of grave and dignified demeanor—these were Lurlet de Chokier and Matthew Laensbergh; the former bearing a letter from the irresolute prince bishop to the citizens, recognizing the election of Beekman as burgomaster, renouncing the impost on meat, and according several other trifling concessions. This tranquilizing oil, poured over the troubled waters of popular commotion, instantly quelled the rebellious tempest, and the people dispersed to attend to their private affairs. Beekman, overwhelmed with disappointment, could not refrain from casting a reproachful glance at the venerable canon, who, unheeding it, took the other's hand, saying—

"Cheer up, my son, we must wait a little longer for your increase of dignity. It is on this very spot that it will take place, but the time has not yet arrived. Ah! I am as anxious as you are for that elevation, which will not fail to happen."

The sincere tone in which these words were uttered, the sigh breathed by the old man as he turned away, struck the new-made burgomaster with surprise, as he well knew that his wife's uncle had no ambitious fancies. But the fact was, that Beekman, wholly absorbed in the pursuit of rank and power, could not see what was clearly apparent to everybody else. Buried in an unceasing round of political and municipal intrigue, he neglected his wife. The demon of ambition having obtained full possession of his soul, to her gentle pleadings for more of his society, the replies were harsh and unfeeling; so much so, indeed, that at last the painful truth became evident to her mind, that he had married her on account of the prediction only. Com-

pletely wretched, she passed her solitary hours in tears. Even the ordinary solace of a deserted wife, the tender cares and duties of a mother, was denied to the unhappy Catharine. The worthy astrologer observed all this, and fully believing in the infallibility of the horoscope, wished as ardently as the ambitious Beekman to see its fulfilment; for, had not the stars proclaimed that Catharine would be happy, when her husband was raised above all his fellow citizens?

Death, the sternest of moralists, however, had his part to play in this little drama, as he has in all others, though his entrance on the stage is so seldom calculated upon by any of us. The magnificent aspirations and subtle schemes of the ambitious burgomaster were in one moment stopped for ever. Not more than two years after the period when this tale commences, at the close of a grand municipal banquet, Beekman dropped down dead, as he was rising to leave the table. Whether poisoned by his political enemies, or stricken by apoplexy, though the question was much debated at the time, it is useful for us to inquire now. Laensbergh unwillingly acknowledged the vanity of astrology, and Catharine wept for a husband from whom she had received but little kindness.

Gerard Dow, to shun the sight of the woman he loved as the wife of another, had settled at Dusseldorf, where he achieved his grand composition of the finding of the true cross by the Empress Helena, and where he commenced his superb picture of the martyrdom of St. Catharine. No sooner did he hear of the death of Beekman than he returned to Liege. After a year of mourning, Catharine married the devoted artist; her uncle, at the wedding dinner, de-

nouncing the follies of astrology. But the pursuits and convictions of a lifetime, even though discovered to be erroneous, are not easily relinquished in old age. Two more years passed over, and again it was a gala day in the city of Liege. The citizens had just finished the inauguration of the statue of their political idol, William Beekman, placed on a lofty pedestal on the summit of the Perron. Dow had laid down his palette to enjoy the evening meal with Catharine, who sang quaint Flemish ditties to her baby in her lap. The door opened, and the worthy canon entered, a reconverted astrologer, proclaiming the fulfilment of the horoscope. "Catharine," he said, "was happy, and Beekman was raised by his fellow-citizens above themselves." Catharine could not deny her happiness, though an incredulous smile, unfavorable to the pretensions of astrology, illumined the listeners' faces. But what of that? The people of Liege considered, and still consider, Matthew Laensbergh the greatest of astrologers. Though he first brought out his almanack in 1636, yet you may purchase it, for this present year of 1854, in all the villages of Belgium. It is still enriched with numerous predictions, which, perhaps, might be very useful, if they were not totally incomprehensible. Thus, like our own famous Francis Moore, the glory or shame—no matter which—of Stationers' Hall, the canon of St. Bartholomew's seems to enjoy an interminable existence. A more pleasing remembrance of him, however, is in Dow's celebrated painting of the "Astrologer," which, tradition states, is a portrait of Laensbergh, as his famous St. Catharine is reputed to be a correct likeness of Catharine Ards-pine.

THE ORPHAN'S FROM THE ALMS-HOUSE.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1854, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

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CHAPTER XII.

It was fortunate for uncle Nathan, that his little harvest was stored in the barn before the storm we have described swept the valley, for a good many crops of corn were destroyed that night, and not only the winter apples, but half the leaves were shaken from the orchard boughs. The river too, was swollen and turbid for several days, and the splintered and half-charred trunk of the old hemlock was at times nearly buried in water.

But uncle Nathan's crop of corn was safely housed in the barn, on the very day before the tempest broke over it, and all the harm he suffered, was a little delay in the "husking frolic," which for many years, had been a sort of annual jubilee in the old place, for the young people of the village, usually managed in some indirect way, to help the old man forward in his farm labor, making planting trees in the spring, mowing parties in the summer, and "husking frolics" in the fall, and this with a hearty good will, that would have convinced any other man that his neighbors got up these impromptu assemblies, for no purpose but their own amusement.

But uncle Nathan had too much goodness in his own heart, not to detect it lurking in any disguise in the hearts of others, and with that true dignity which makes the acceptance a frankly offered kindness, pleasant as the power of conferring favors, he always looked forward to these gala days with interest, striving by generous hospitality to repay back in gaiety the benefits he received.

Aunt Hannah too, had a genuine sense of all this kindness in her young neighbors, and always stood ready to perform her part of the entertainment with prompt energy, which, if not as genial as the good nature of uncle Nat, revealed itself in a form quite as acceptable, for never in any other place were such pumpkin pies, drop cakes, tarts and doughnuts produced, as emanated from aunt Hannah's kitchen on these occasions.

But I have said the "husking frolic" was put off a short time in order to give time for repairs after the storm. For two whole days uncle Nathan had his hands full, gathering up the winter apples that had been dashed from their boughs on that awful night. In this labor, aunt Hannah was first and foremost abroad with her splint basket directly after breakfast, and gathering up the fruit with an energy that seemed quite unequal to her age.

I am almost afraid to say it, because some of my readers, are doubtless young ladies of the young American school, who will think my heroine degraded by her usefulness, but Mary Fuller put on her little quilted hood, the moment the breakfast things were washed up, and following the old judge into the orchard, with another splint basket filled it, turn for turn with aunt Hannah, while uncle Nathan—bless his old heart—carried the baskets and emptied them into a little mountain of red and golden apples, beneath his favorite tree.

I dislike to make this confession, because, in every sense of the word, Mary Fuller was my idea of a perfect lady—or, as near an approach to that exquisite being, as a girl of her years ever can be, more than this she promised those higher and still more nobler qualifications that distinguish souls lifted out from the multitude by imagination and intellect, and for the very reason perhaps she was not ashamed of being useful, or of partaking heartily in any labor borne by her benefactors. In truth, souls like her's, are ashamed to undertake no duty that comes naturally in the path of life—yet Mary Fuller was among the God-gifted of earth. I have only spoken of her up to this time, as a bright, cheerful, good little girl, earnest in the right, and shrinking from the wrong, because I deem such qualities, the very essence and life of a firm intellectual character, because I acknowledge no greatness that has not strong sense and moral worth for its foundation.

Like the green leaves that clasp in a rose bud, these qualities must unfold themselves first, in the life of any human being, allowing thought

and observation to reach the intellect, as the sunshine pierces through these mossy leaves to the heart of the flower. Precocious intellect is not genius, but a disease. It is the bud that blossoms out of season, because there is a warmth of the heart piercing it open. There is a species of insanity that men call genius which springs from intellectual harmony, without the moral and physical strength necessary to its perfect development, but with this erratic mischief we have nothing to do. Mary, the reader well knows, was deformed in person, and as a child almost hideous, but wholesome food, fresh mountain air and household kindness, had so modified and changed this deformity, that it was scarcely noticed in the village, though a stranger would undoubtedly have regarded her with compassion, or, as the character might prove, with curiosity.

Still there was something in the young girl's love difficult to describe, but which possessed a charm that beauty never approached, a quick kindling of the eyes—a smile that lighted up her whole face, till the eye was fascinated by it. This charm was more remarkable from the usually grave expression of her face. She never had been what is usually termed a forward child, and in early life, the common expression of her face was sad, almost mournful—as she grew older and happier, this settled into a gentle gravity, only changed as we have described, by that thrilling smile, which actually transfigured her into the semblance of an angel—you forgot her deformity then, forgot her humble garments, her dull complexion, and wondered what power had, for the moment, rendered her so beautiful.

I am sure that this expression of the soul had deepened and become more vivid, since her conversation with uncle Nathan on the night of the storm; but she was more thoughtful than ever, and crept away to her room whenever she could find time, as if some object of interest forced her into solitude. The night before the apple-gathering, aunt Hannah found her seated by a little cherry wood table near the window, writing upon the blank leaves of an old copy-book; this had often happened before, but this time there was a nervous rapidity of the hand, and that singular glow upon the face, which made the old woman pause to look at her.

"I wonder what on earth that girl is always writing about," said Aunt Hannah, as she surrendered her basket of apples to uncle Nathan that day. "Last night she was at it again, I went close up to her and looked over her shoulder, she had not heard me till then, but the minute I touched her, the color came all over

her neck and face, as if she'd been caught stealing, I wonder what it's all about, Nathan?"

"Never you mind, Hannah. Let the child do as she pleases," answered uncle Nathan, pouring the ripe apples softly down to the heap. "There is something busy in her mind that neither you nor I can make out yet. In my opinion, such girls as our Mary should be left to their own ways a good deal. Let her alone Hannah, there is not a wrong thought in her heart, and never was."

"I don't understand her," said aunt Hannah, receiving her empty basket, and settling the broad kerchief laid over her head.

"Now, don't meddle with what you can't understand," said uncle Nathan, earnestly, "you and I are getting to be old people, Hannah, and as we go down hill, this girl will be climbing up; don't let us drag her down with the weight of our old-fashioned ideas. There is something more than common, I tell you, in the girl."

"But this writing won't get her a living, when we're dead and gone, Nathan."

"I don't know, education is a great thing now-a-days—who knows but she may yet rise to be a teacher at the Academy."

A grim smile came to aunt Hannah's face, "you may be right, Nathan," she said. "More strange things than that have happened in our time, so I'll just do as you think best, but she does waste a good deal of time and candle-light with her books and things."

"She's brought more light into the house than she will ever take away, heaven bless her," answered uncle Nathan.

Just then, Mary came up with her basket, exercise and the cold autumn air, had left her cheeks rosy with color, she looked beautiful to the eyes of her benefactors.

"Now," she said, pouring down her apples, "had not you better go into the cellar, uncle Nathan, and get the apple-bin ready, the air feels like frost?"

"They're not going into our cellar this year," said aunt Hannah, looking up into the branches above her, as if she feared to encounter the inquiring eyes of her companions, "we must do without winter apples this year, I've sold the whole crop."

"Do without winter apples," exclaimed uncle Nathan, with a downcast look, "is it so bad as that sister?"

"Apples are high down in York this fall," she answered, evasively, "that note must be paid, and more things done."

Mary turned away, sighing heavily, "Shall I never be able to help along," she muttered

sorrowfully to herself, and she fell into a train of thought that lasted till long after the apples were all gathered in a pack ready for the cart that was to carry them away.

"Hannah," said uncle Nathan, the moment they were alone, "what has happened; Anna's boy, is it anything about him?"

"His father is sick, Nathan, very sick, and will starve if we don't come to his help a little."

"And this is why we are to have no winter apples in the cellar, I'm sure it's of no consequence. I've thought a good while that old people like us have no use for apples, we hain't got the teeth to eat them, you know. But then Mary is so fond of them, supposing we take out a few just for her, you know."

"No," said aunt Hannah, sorrowfully, "she can do without apples, but they cannot do without bread, besides she wouldn't touch them if she knew."

"No, no, I'm sure she wouldn't—but isn't there anything I could give up: there's the cider, I used to be very fond of ginger and cider, winter evenings, but somehow without apples, it wouldn't seem exactly nat'ral: supposing you save a few apples for her without letting her know, and sell the cider, for these temperance

times it would be a good example to set to the young men, you know."

"No!" answered aunt Hannah, with unusual energy, "not a comfort shall you give up, I will work my fingers to the bone first."

"But," said uncle Nathan, rather timidly, as if he ventured a proposition that was likely to be ill received.

"Why not let the poor fellow come here?—it would not cost much to keep him at the home-stead, and Mary is such a dear little nurse."

Aunt Hannah did not receive this as he had expected, but with a slow wave of the head, "That can never be—I couldn't breathe under the same roof with them, don't mention it again, Nathan?"

"I never will," said the old man, touched by the sad determination in her voice and manner, "only tell me what I can do."

"Nothing, only let me alone," was the reply, and taking up her empty basket, aunt Hannah went to work again.

"Poor Hannah," murmured the good old man, "poor Hannah, she's got a hard road to hoe and always had, I'd help her out with the weeds, if some one would only tell me how, but she will work by herself."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)